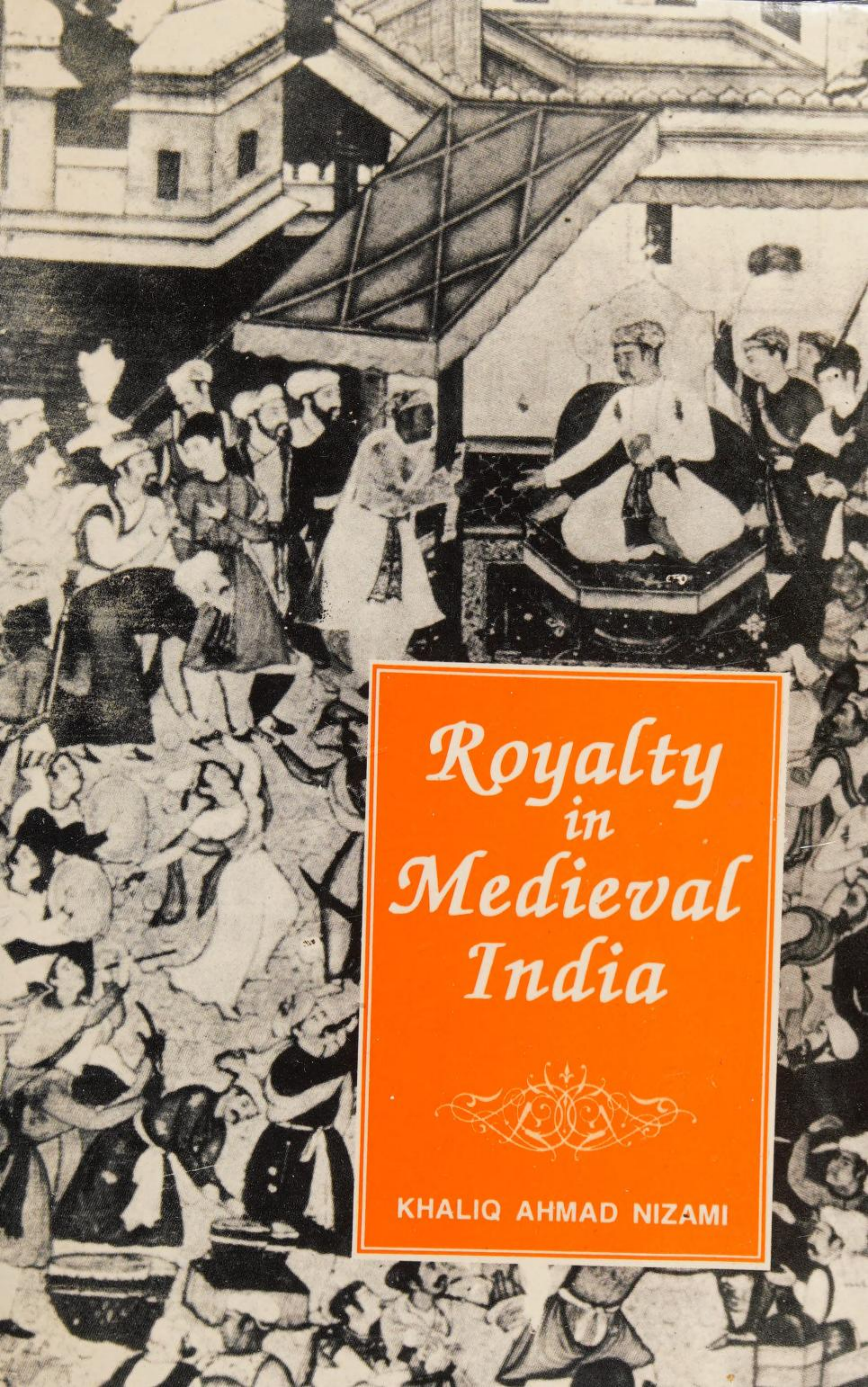

Royalty in Medieval India

KHALIQ AHMAD NIZAMI

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While considerable literature has appeared on the political history and institutions of the Delhi Sultanate, a study of royalty as such has largely remained a desideratum. The present work fills this gap in our historical studies. It surveys the historical landscape of medieval India from the foot of the royal throne. Besides a glimpse into the public and private life of the sultans, it throws lot of light on their ethnic background, their legal and actual position, their patronage of art and culture, their religious leanings, contact with outside world and relations with the Hindus. In short it covers the entire spectrum of the life of the Delhi sultans from the *haràm* to the battlefield. The study is based on an extensive search and discovery of new source material.

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K.A. Nizami was for many years the Chairman of the Department of History and Director of the Centre of Advanced Study in History at Aligarh Muslim University. He also served as India's ambassador to Syria. His important publications are: *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India During the Thirteenth Century* (Delhi, 1974); and *On History and Historians of Medieval India* (New Delhi, 1983).

Royalty in Medieval India

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To the memory
of my History teachers
Professor G.N. Bose Mullick
Professor B.R. Chatterji
Professor S.P. Sinha
Professor Balkrishna
their lectures still resound in my ears.

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Preface

The present work surveys the historical landscape of medieval India from the foot of the royal throne. It attempts a synoptic overview of the ethnic background, the legal and actual position as well as the interests and activities of the sultans of Delhi (1206-1526). Besides providing a glimpse into the public and private life of the sultans, it delineates also their patronage of letters, art and culture. It covers the entire spectrum of their life—from the *haram* to the battlefield. The aim is not to analyse the administrative structure or to discuss the political or economic problems and policies of the period but to have a look at royalty as a segment of society functioning in a broader framework of political and cultural exigencies. A list of sources on which this study is based is given in Bibliography.

I must thank Mr. Devendra Jain for the interest that he has taken in the production of this work.

K.A. Nizami

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Introduction

What place did royalty occupy in the body-politic of medieval times? Fakhr-i-Mudabbir compared the sultan to the 'head' in the human system;[1] Imam Ghazzali likened him to the 'heart';[2] for Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi, he was the 'soul', and people, the physical frame.[3] However, in such comparisons, the difference is merely of metaphor, not of essence. As a human body could not function without any of them, so also the human society could not exist without a ruler. Barani believed that after prophethood, kingship was the most prestigious institution.[4] According to Fakhr-i-Mudabbir the *raison d'être* for having a sultan was:

> "People would devour each other if there was no sultan."[5]

Muhammad bin Tughluq broadcast his views about the crucial nature of monarchy through his coins.[6] Amir Khusrau compared the sultan to the 'shepherd', without whose care the herd found its place in the stomachs of wolves.[7] Abul Fazl believed that without a king no temporal or religious life was possible.[8] The indispensability of a ruler for proper and peaceful functioning of the social order was emphasised by all medieval writers on the subject.

Nevertheless, in medieval India the role of the royalty and *ra'iya* was basically complementary. One could not ignore the other. According to Barani, a sultan who did not gain the support of his subjects was a usurper.[9] Justice of the king and loyalty of the people went hand in hand, and buttressed each other's position. The author of *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* described people as the "backbone of the country".[10] If the people lost faith in a ruler, his power was deprived of its main prop and therefore disintegration set it. Medieval Muslim thinkers declared without any hesitation that a country could flourish under a just non-Muslim ruler, but could not survive even under a Muslim king if he was unjust.[11] Peaceful social order which ensured stable political life was as much the responsibility of a ruler as that of the people. 'People get the government they deserve' (*A'mal-u-kum 'ummal-o-kum*: your actions become your rulers) was a popular saying.[12] Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din

Auliya told his audience that instead of condemning a king for his tyranny, people should scrutinize their own actions[13] because in the ultimate analysis their destiny is shaped by their own action. 'Isami echoed the same sentiments when he said: "When we disobey God, he plants over us a tyrant ruler".[14] Thus if a tyrant king had to face rebellions and resistance as a divine retribution for his misdeeds, people, sunk in immorality and sin, had also to suffer the rule of a tyrant king as a punishment for their misdeeds. A healthy moral order was as much the result of the efforts of a just king as that of the righteous people. Thus in medieval times both the *ra'iyya* and the royalty were held responsible for the well-being of society.

II

Amir Khusrau demanded allegiance and obedience to the sultan in the light of the Qur'anic verse: "Obey God; obey the Prophet and obey those charged with authority amongst you (S.IV.59)."[15] Fakhr-i-Mudabbir thought that since these three loyalties had been mentioned in a sequence, they are inter-related.[16] Medieval writers, however, emphasized a ruler's duty to respect the *shari'at* law in administration, and to be virtuous in his personal life.[17] They advised the sultan to be earnest in consultation with others, but firm in the implementation of his decisions. Rest and motion, punishment and reward were to go hand in hand if authority was to strike roots in the confidence of the people. Strict vigilance on behalf of the sultan was necessary in all spheres of public and private life in order to ensure security and safety of the people. "One who cannot take care of his own head", remarked Amir Khusrau, "how can he provide protection to the heads of others!"[18] The sultan was expected to appoint honest and conscientious officers after thorough scrutiny, as the officers appointed by a sultan either added to his popularity or created discontent against his authority. "The shadow which falls wide on the people, comes out not from the trunk but from the branches,"[19] remarks Amir Khusrau. The *maliks* and *amirs* were expected to be bountiful and generous towards the people and share with them what they got from the king. "Be like a bucket which takes out water and pours it on the thirsty. Do not be like sand which absorbs all that comes to it",[20] was Amir Khusrau's advice to them.

Dispensation of justice was considered to be the most important duty of a ruler, nay the very *raison d'être* of monarchy. Firuz Shah Tughluq frankly admitted that monarchy could not co-exist with

injustice or tyranny.[21] Fakhr-i-Mudabbir quotes two traditions of the Prophet which show that justice was considered an essential obligation of the rulers. One *hadith* says: "Dispensation of justice for an hour is better than prayers for sixty years."[22] Another *hadith* says: "A just ruler would be under my banner on the Day of Judgement."[23] He further states that of the sevnty-two revealed books, none condemned tyranny more than the *Qur'an*.[24] Medieval political treatises, like *Adab-ul-Harb, Zakhirat-ul-Muluk, Fatawa-i-Jahandari, Nuh Sipihr* and *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* throw considerable light on the duties and functions of a ruler as visualized by the people in medieval India. Comparing the ruler to a shepherd, the author of *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* remarks: "The sheep are not for the shepherd; the shepherd is for them."[25] He tilts the balance in favour of the people and remarks: "People seek royal help to protect themselves from the clutches of tyrants, but when the king himself becomes a tyrant the condition of those who need royal help and protection cannot be imagined?"[26] Tyranny generated tyranny and if a ruler behaved like a tyrant, his servants left no stone unturned in tyrannizing over the people.[27] The following verses of Sa'di were cited to emphasize the royal responsibility to protect public property:

> If a king will get one apple from a garden of his subjects, his slaves and servants will root out the entire tree.
> If a king thinks it proper to get five eggs without paying their price, his slaves will roast one thousand hens and cocks.[28]

Reiterating the same view in a different context Amir Khusrau said:

> If the *shahanah* deducts two *dangs* from them, the *khut* also reserves his own share (i.e. takes the whole for himself).[29]

Then he pointed out:

> The poor Hindu (cultivator) harbours hostility against the *khut* (for his exploitation) and drinks blood in his enmity but he dare not pour it out (by taking revenge).[30]
> It was generally believed that prosperous conditions and good harvests disappeared the moment any idea of exploitation flashed across the mind of a ruler.[31]

It is in this conceptual framework that the achievements and failures of royalty during the Sultanate period may be viewed.

III

Max Weber has considered three major types of legitimate domination: legal authority, traditional authority and charismatic authority.[32] He

pointed out their rational, traditional and charismatic grounds of legitimacy. How the sultans of Delhi derived their authority and what legal and charismatic factors buttressed or weakened their position is an interesting study in itself. Iltutmish's authority was initially based on the charisma of his personality; the grant of a letter of investiture (*manshur*) from the caliph gave it legal authority and buttressed his position. His house continued to rule for 80 years on the basis of their hereditary rights. It was impressed on the people that kingship could be inherited through descent in one sacred family only. The agony and distress of the people at the fall of the Ilbarite power illustrate the extent to which hereditary rights had been acknowledged during the early Sultanate period.[33]

To counteract suspicions in the public mind about the basis of his power, Balban resorted to the divine right of kings. He emphasized that the source of royal authority was divine and that it had nothing to do with the people. The heart of a ruler, Balban used to claim, was like a divine mirror which constantly received guidance from Him.[34] Though he could not develop charisma of personality like Iltutmish, he overawed the public mind by his display of grandeur, power and authority. In this process he raised kingship to a divine pedestal. The ideological basis for Balban's concept of royalty may be found in the *Siyasat Namah* of Nizam-ul-Mulk whose 'basic premise for all human affairs is the divine authority of the ruler'.[35]

The Khaljis based their authority neither on legitimacy, nor tradition or divine power. They claimed obedience because they had the power to elicit it. No divine right was invoked; nor any hereditary claims put forward. They did not trace their genealogies to the legendary heroes; and also never claimed to be representatives of God on earth.

The Tughluqs tried to buttress their position on legal, traditional and charismatic grounds though their main strength lay in their appeal to religious sentiments. All the three great Tughluq sultans—Ghiyas-u'd-din, Muhammad bin Tughluq and Firuz Shah—sought to strengthen their position on religious grounds. Ghiyas-u'd-din appealed to religious sentiments in his opposition to Khusrau Khan. Muhammad bin Tughluq responded to developments in the Islamic world and resolved to implement Ibn Taimiyya's ideas in the Indian context. Firuz Shah's religious fervour and activities, as highlighted in his *Futuhat*, reveal the extent to which religious factors were invoked by him to consolidate his authority.

The Syed rulers took advantage of their descent—genuine or

concocted—from the Prophet. No earlier dynasty had claimed that position. It was a narrow claim, given the background of Tughluq recourse to and reliance on religion. Their legal authority was limited, but the charismatic appeal of their descent was nevertheless there.

The Lodis had neither any religious, nor hereditary, legal, or charismatic claim to royal power. It was a tribal affair—based on tribal loyalties. They had to make full concessions to tribal traditions in their dealings with the nobility. Their kingship was thus reduced to a position of *primus inter pares*.

The positions of the rulers were influenced by the attitudes and ideals of the ruling oligarchy which constituted their main props of strength and authority. Bahlul could not behave like Balban: and Jalal-u'd-din Khalji's melodramatic performance at *Kaushak-i-Lal* was in fact, a tacit confession of the basic weakness of the ruling faction which had brought him to power. It was compactness, loyalty and capacity to enlist public support which enhanced the power and position of the ruling elite and ultimately buttressed or weakened the position of a sultan.

IV

How far was the life of the people influenced by the ways of the royalty? A medieval monarch was the orbit of the social system of the period. He not only set the tone of the society but also determined the social behaviour of the peopole. 'People follow the ways[36] of their rulers',[37] Barani often quotes this saying in connection with the social atmosphere prevalent at the capital. It did not mean *cujus regio, ejus religio*, but simply hints at the fact that people draw inspiration from the lives and ways of the kings in their social and cultural attitudes and activities. Though barring the nobles, and that too in a very limited way, no section of the people could think of emulating the sovereign in any walk of life, the general tone of the society was, no doubt, set by his likes and dislikes. Iltutmish's devotion to the mystics and the mystic cult created in Delhi a favourable atmosphere for the mystic institutions to strike roots and flourish. Balban's abstemious ways and personal piety had its effect on the life of the people.[38] When Kaiqubad started a life of wine and venery, Barani informs us, "courtesans appeared in the shadow of every wall and in every quarter a singer or a song writer lifted his head.... From all the quarters of the cities and the empire, minstrels and rhetors, and beauties and singers and wits and

buffoons and mimics came to the court. The palace teemed with life and licentiousness was the order of the day. The mosques were deserted by their worshippers and the taverns were thronged. No one cared to stay in the cloisters but distilleries became place of note."[39] The demands of the court went a long way in shaping the trends of economic life. During the time of Kaiqubad the price of wine increased tenfold.[40] Similarly 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji's strict regulations to improve the morals of the society and his firm resolve to give up wine brought about a change in the habits of the people also. But when Mubarak Khalji came to the throne, the convivial atmosphere of the earlier period returned with all the ruinous violence of a suppressed force.[41] But when Muhammad bin Tughluq rigorously enforced the laws pertaining to censorship of public morals (*ihtisab*), issued prohibitionary orders and exhorted people to acquire religious knowledge, the atmosphere of the capital changed so completely that even singers and servants of the stables became punctual in offering obligatory prayers; people who were generally indifferent towards religion could be seen on the streets of Delhi committing to memory religious texts and formulae.[42] People judged a ruler's ways and values by the atmosphere prevailing in the bazars, as life at the court was reflected in the ambience of the streets and the markets.

V

Rebellion against the authority of a king was condemned not merely on political grounds but religious reasons were also adduced against it. In the early literature of the Sultanate period '*asi shud* (became a sinner) is the word used for those who defied the royal authority.[43] The coins of Muhammad bin Tughluq had on them an Arabic inscription which meant:

> "Whoever obeys the sultan, obeys God."[44]

But the moment a king was overthrown, people forgot all about him. Shakespeare makes Richard II say:

> "Not all the water in the rough rude sea can wash the balm off from the anointed king" (Act III, sec. 2).

This was never the principle in the Delhi sultanate. When Kaiqubad was mercilessly kicked into the river, no body wept for him; when Jalal-u'd-din Khalji was treacherously assassinated at Kara, even his closest courtiers forgot all about him. 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji represented in his

person the spirit of Khalji militarism but his last days reminded one of Tennyson's remarks: "Authority forgets a dying king". Amir Khusrau ruefully referred to him as *Shah Shahid* (the martyred ruler).[45]

VI

The literary and cultural atmosphere of medieval India derived its hue and colour from the life and activities of the sultans. Sometimes their activities to promote education led to the rise of *madrasah* towns.[46] The court set the norms of cultured behaviour and encouraged or dampened literary activities of the people. A cultured court found its reflection in the life of the people, determined their academic pursuits and bestowed respectability and dignity on cultured behaviour. The '*ulama*, the mystics, the nobles and the elite with religious and philanthropic sentiments no doubt contributed to the educational activity according to their resources, but it was the sultans who set the pace by establishing *maktabs* and *madrasahs*, providing boarding and lodging facilities and granting stipends and allowances to both the teachers and the taught.

A sultan with genuine academic interests was often instrumental in freeing scholarship from geographical barriers and political bonds. Royal generosity attracted intellectual celebrities from distant lands. When Baghdad fell, Islamic scholars migrated to Delhi and sultanate became the repository of Islamic learning in the East.

Since the irruption of the Mongols and the rise of the Sultanate of Delhi took place almost simultaneously, the literary and religious heritage of Islam reached India in a highly developed form and saved Indian scholarship from teething troubles. When Muslim cultural centres in Central and Western Asia began to rebuild their houses after the storm blew over, the sultans of Delhi were not slow to establish cultural and intellectual contacts with them. Scholars in Delhi came to know about the literary activities beyond the Indian frontiers. Sometimes the sultans desired books being written in Central Asia to be dedicated to them.[47] When 'Alim bin 'Ala compiled his *magnum opus* on Islamic law, the *Fatawa-i-Tatar Khaniyah*, he was not unaware of what the jurists in the contemporary Islamic world were arguing about religious problems.

The sultans of Delhi were racially Turks, but culturally they were Persians. As was inevitable under the circumstances, the atmosphere of their courts—its customs, ceremonials, feasts and festivals—became

Iranian. The festival of *Nauruz* and the customs of *pabos*, *zaminbos* etc. which were popular at the Delhi court were Iranian in origin.

A policy of *laissez faire* was followed with regard to Hindu cultural values and traditions. The Hindu devotional songs on the banks of the river in the early hours of the morning were appreciated by the sufi saints,[48] and the sultans allowed worship of idols even near their palaces.[49] The Muslims joined the Hindus in celebrating those festivals with which polytheistic ideas were not associated. The festival of Holi was celebrated at the court.[50] Hindu *jogis* and religious philosophers were found discussing the basic problems of religion and philosophy in the *khanqahs*[51] as well as in the courts.[52] Along with Arabic and Persian poets, hundreds of Hindi poets adorned the courts of the Delhi sultans.[53] The respect of the sultans for Hindu religious traditions found its expression in the founding of cities.[54] Ganges water was taken for a sultan to Deogir everyday.[55] Hindu classical literature in temple libraries was protected[56] and the preservation of Hindu monuments was undertaken with keen interest.[57] The extent to which Hindus had acquired mastery over Muslim sciences may be gauged from the fact that a Hindu, Brahman by name, used to give instruction to Muslims.[58] Nothing illustrates better the involvement of Hindus in the construction and repair of buildings by the sultans than the way the Hindu masons and architects worked in the construction and repair of the Qutb Minar.

Thus the sultans extended patronage in varying degrees to different cultural trends—both Indian and foreign. The cultural efflorescence in the provinces of Malwa, Gujarat, Jaunpur and Bengal, while emphasizing local traditions, paved the way for the mingling of these traditions in a broader Indian framework.

VII

The establishment of the Delhi sultanate had paved the way for an urban revolution which threw open the cities of northern India with a high caste population to all, irrespective of their caste or creed.[59] The town planning of the Rajput period, as described by Alberuni, was given up in favour of cosmopolitan cities providing shelter to people of different social and religious backgrounds and belonging to different vocational and professional groups. The new cities which were built by the new working class gave fresh impetus to trade and commerce. The horizon of the merchants' world was broadened by introducing

uniformity in the system of taxation and rules of octroi from Sind to Bengal. The new cities ensured the safety of roads and routes and helped in bringing contumacious elements of surrounding areas under control. Works of public welfare—roads, tanks, rest houses, hospitals, reservoirs, aqueducts, canals and bridges—constructed by the sultans created not only prosperous conditions but added to their popularity. In fact, the only parameter for measuring the contribution of a sultan to the prosperity of the people was his involvement in works of public welfare which, as Amir Khusrau puts it, benefited all people, high and low (*khas-o-'am*)[60] irrespective of any consideration. The *Bait-ul-Mal* (State Exchequer) had special provision for the help of the needy, the poor and the destitute. Sometimes the sultans set apart a portion of their privy purse for charitable purposes. The belief that works of public welfare lead to the ruler's longevity of life[61] further encouraged activity in that direction.

VIII

The source material for the history of medieval India is prolific and varied, but it needs careful psychohistorical analysis. As this literature was produced by different segments of society and developed under different mental and emotional climates, with different audiences in view, it cannot be subjected to uniform standards of criticism and evaluation. What is needed is to evolve tools of criticism for every specific type of literature in consonance with the traditions that produced it.

The official histories of the Sultanate period breathe the spirit of medieval *fath namahs* (communiques of victory) which were compiled for the applause of the gallery and indulged in hyperbole, exaggeration and flattery.[62] Poetic literature produced during the Sultanate period contains considerable material of historical importance which needs critical apparatus appropriate to poetry to analyze it. The poetic works of Jamal-u'd-din Hansavi, Siraji, Zia Nakhshabi, Shihab Muhmara, Amir Khusrau, Hasan Sijzi and Mutahhar of Kara, in particular, throw valuable light on the cultural life and trends of the Sultanate period. The compilation of works on specific themes—like *Adab-ul-Harb-wa-Shuja'a* on the art of warfare by Fakhr-i-Mudabbir during the time of Iltutmish, the *'Ilm-ul-Hisab* on the maintenance of records by 'Abd-ul-Hamid Muharrir Ghaznavi during the time of Firuz Shah, the *Ghunyat-ul-Munya* of an anonymous author on music and *Vividha Tirthakalpa* of

Jinaprabha Suri during the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq, show that scholarship was coming out of traditional grooves and was anxious to explore fresh avenues of expression and investigation. No sultan of Delhi, barring of course Firuz Shah Tughluq, attempted any autobiographical account of his activities. But works like those of Minhaj, Amir Khusrau, 'Afif, Yahya Sirhindi, express the ambitions and aspirations of the sultan to whom these were presented.

No age can be properly appreciated unless its total literary activity—whether in prose or in verse, whether produced in the courts or in the *khanqahs*, is taken into consideration. The *malfuzat* (conversation of saints) are of invaluable help in surveying the historical landscape from an angle entirely different from that of the political chronicles. Assessment of persons and their achievements assumes an entirely different colour and connotation in that light of this literature. The official historian Amir Khusrau gives a graphic account of the booty brought from the South by Malik Kafur and displayed on the Chabutra-i-Nasiri, dazzling the eyes of the spectators. In the *khanqah* of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya a reference is made to this wealth on the same day and the Shaikh tells his audience that wealth should be used for public welfare. Ziya-u'd-din Barani highlights the militaristic aspect of the market control of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji but Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh brings into focus its altruistic nature. Similarly poetic literature, as Kroeber has pointed out, reveals the spirit of an age better than prose. A verse sometimes becomes an expression of the innermost longings of a sensitive heart and illuminates a whole milieu.

In medieval times, particularly after the rise of monarchy in the Islamic world, considerable literature was produced in Arabic, Persian and Turkish under the rubrics *pand*, *wasaya*, *nasai'h*[63] etc. for the advice of rulers and the governing classes. It embodied in a subtle way the expectations of people from their rulers. Direct advice to the royalty being not feasible,[64] the medium of stories and fables was sometimes sought to convey the sentiments of people. Sometimes moral exhortations were put in the beaks of birds and the mouths of animals (e.g. *Kalila wa Dimna*, and Ibn Zafar's *Sulwan al-matali 'fi 'udwan al-atba'*); sometimes works were fabricated in the name of eminent philosophers of the past (e.g. Aristotle, Bu Ali Sina); sometimes *wasaya* collections were designed to convey the counsels of eminent rulers of the past to their descendants (e.g. *Wasaya* of Nawshervan, *Wasaya* of Jamshed, and the *Pand Namah* of Subuktigin). Often such discourses centred round religious axioms—the *Qur'an*, the *hadith* and the sayings

of *auliya*—and incidents from the lives of the early caliphs were cited to add strength to their admonitions and influence the thought and behaviour of the rulers.[65] The sultans listened to this type of literature with interest but acted upon it only if other interests did not come into conflict with it. The references to the legendary heroes of Persia (e.g. Kaimurs, Kaiqubad, Kaikaus, Kaikhusrau etc.) in *Adab-ul-Harb-wa-Shuja'at* makes it abundantly clear that the ideological inspiration of the sultans of Delhi came from them.[66] Iltutmish procured from Baghdad *Adab-us-Salatin* and *Ma'asir-us-Salatin* for instructing his sons in the art of government.[67] He was extremely delighted when the caliph of Baghdad sent to him a copy of *Safinat-ul-Khulafa* which contained some autographic inscriptions from Mamun.[68]

No writer advising the royalty could cut himself off from the milieu in which he lived. This literature therefore reflects like seismograph the ideals and aspirations of the people. Bosworth has rightly observed about *Siyasat Namah* that it contains "the distilled wisdom of some four decades of administrative activity in Persia."[69] The *Qabus Namah*, the *Siyasat Namah*, the *Nasihat-ul-Muluk*[70] became the chief works of advice to the rulers in the medieval period. An interesting Turkish contribution to this type of literature is Yusuf Khass Hajib's *Kutagu Bilig*[71] where Turkish traditions of royalty and wisdom have been compared with Arab and Iranian counterparts.

The works of Fakhr-i-Mudabbir,[72] Shaikh 'Ali Hamadani[73] and Ziya Barani[74] throw considerable light on the expectations of people from their rulers in medieval India. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir highlights the responsibilities of a ruler in times of war;[75] 'Ali Hamadani in times of peace; Ziya Barani in times of a crisis. A comparative study of the variations in the moods of the poet in *Miftah-ul-Futuh, Khaza'in-ul-Futuh, Nuh Sipihr* and *Tughluq Namah* would reveal changes in the moods and apprehensions of the people after a change in the political climate. Application of the psycho-historic method of analysis and interpretation to this literature may bring to focus the position of the royalty and the expectations of the *ra'iyya* during the medieval period.

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14. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, pp. 24, 456.
15. *Nuh Sipihr*, pp. 226-29.
16. *Adab-ul-Harb*, p. 5; also see *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah*, p. 12.
17. *Nuh Sipihr*, pp. 227, 248; *Adab-ul-Harb*, p. 94.
18. Ibid., p. 228.
19. Ibid., p. 243. See also *Adab-ul-Harb*, p. 5.
20. *Nuh Sipihr*, p. 254.
21. *Sirat*, 16b f.
22. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah*, p. 141; *Adab-ul-Harb*, p. 64.
23. *Abad-ul-Harb*, p. 15.
24. Ibid., p. 90.
25. *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, 16b, f.
26. Ibid.
27. *Sirat*, MS.
28. Ibid.
29. *Nuh Sipihr*, p. 253.
30. Ibid.
31. *Adab-ul-Harb*, pp. 65-66; 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 181-82.
32. *Economy and Society*, vol. I, pp. 212-71.
33. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 175-76.
34. Ibid., pp. 70-71.
35. C.E. Bosworth in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p. 987.
36. The word *din* used here means ways and practices, not formal religion.
37. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 73, 130; *Fatawa-i-Jahandari*, p. 318; Shaikh 'Abd-ul-Quddus, *Anwar-ul-'Ayun*, 16.
38. *Ma'asir-i-Rahimi*, I, p. 305; *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 156 et seq.
39. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 129-30.
40. Ibid.
41. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 384.
42. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, pp. 130-31; *Masalik-ul-Absar*, p. 52.
43. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah*, p. 12.
44. N. Wright, p. 143; E. Thomas, pp. 249-50.
45. *Nuh Sipihr*, p. 236. It is difficult to say why he used the word *shahid* for him. Barani uses the term for Iltutmish (p. 38) and Muhammad bin Tughluq (p. 525). Why? None of them was a martyr!
46. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 563.
47. *Akhbar-ul-Akhyar*, p. 142.

48. *Anwar-ul-'Ayun*, p. 1; *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, p. 81; *Nuh Sipihr*, p. 159.
49. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 214-18.
50. 'Isami, *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 515.
51. See, Nizami, *Life and Times of Shaikh Farid-u'd-din Ganj-i-Shakar*, pp. 105-6; *Life and Times of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya*, pp. 126-28.
52. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 515; *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, pp. 258, 260-63.
53. *Masalik-ul-Absar*, p. 32; *Nuh Sipihr*, p. 379.
54. *Cambridge History of India*, vol. III, p. 154.
55. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 3.
56. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, vol. I, p. 249; *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, vol. I, p. 233; *Tarikh-i-Ferishta*, I, p. 148.
57. See *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* (MS).
58. Badaoni, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, vol. I, p. 323.
59. For details, Nizami, *Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century.*
60. *Nuh Sipihr*, p. 229.
61. *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, MS.
62. See Nizami, *On History and Historians of Medieval India.*
63. Even in historical works, sections on *pand* were included (e.g. *Nuh Sipihr*, pp. 226 et seq.). The *Fatawa-i-Jahandari* was also called *Nasa'ih-i-Jahandari* (text, p. 1, fn.1).
64. Amir Khusrau thought that it was necessary to give advice to the king, in gratitude, even if he paid no attention to it. *Nuh Sipihr*, p. 218.
65. See for instance, Zia Nakhshabi's *Silk-us-Suluk*, pp. 38, 40-41, 50-52 ff. Also his *Tuti Namah* (MS).
66. *Adab-ul-Harb*, pp. 6-15.
67. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 144-45.
68. Barani, p. 103.
69. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, article on *Nasihat al-Muluk*, p. 987.
70. Its authorship to Imam Ghazzali has been wrongly attributed. Its thought content and approach is inconsistent with his principal works—the *Ihya-ul-'ulum* and *Kimiya-i-Sa'adat.*
71. Translated into English by Robert Dankoff as *Wisdom of Royal Glory*, Chicago, 1983.
72. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah* and *Adab-ul-Harb wa Shuja'a.*
73. *Zakhirat-ul-Muluk*, MS, Personal Collection. See particularly chapter V which deals with kings and their responsibilities.
74. *Fatawa-i-Jahandari; Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi; Na'at-i Muhammadi;* and *Tarikh-i-A'al-i-Barmak.*
75. *Adab-ul-Harb-wa-Shuja'ah*, pp. 19 et seq.

CHAPTER 1

Dynasties: Ethnic Origin and Features

The ninth century of the Christian era witnessed the beginning of a terrible population pressure in Central Asia which destabilized in course of time every political and social institution of the region.[1] Impelled by *lebensraum* (living space) one tribe after another moved westwards. This movement of population inevitably led to many social and political upheavals. Old patterns of life were shaken and earlier political systems developed cracks. Social stability gave way to social chaos in which the old tribes lost their identity, status and position.

None of the five dynasties that ruled during the Sultanate period had any authentic record of exercising royal or even tribal authority,[2] but in the Indian situation it was considered necessary to forge links with some legendary heroes, distinguished ruling houses or the family of the Prophet in order to enhance the charisma of their authority. Their claims to be scions of ruling families can neither be taken seriously nor rejected categorically for lack of evidence. Face to face with new conditions of life it was thought necessary to fabricate genealogies so that people who believed in kingship as a prerogative of dynasties with royal background, could submit to their authority.

The following five dynasties ruled over northern India during the Sultanate period:

Ilbarites	602-89/1206-90	84 years
Khaljis	689-720/1290-1320	30 years
Tughluqs	720-815/1320-1413	93 years
Syeds	817-55/1414-51	37 years
Lodis	855-932/1451-1526	75 years

The average life-span of a dynasty was 62 years. The Tughluq dynasty had the longest tenure of rule; the Khaljis ruled for the shortest period. Bahlul Lodi's was the longest reign (39 years). The life-span of a dynasty was determined by its ethnic position and the spirit of *camaraderie* among its members.

It is sometimes thought, though without any justification, that these sultans were Pathans or Afghans.[3] Barring the Lodis, none of them was

a Pathan or originally belonged to Afghanistan, though some of them might have lived there for some time.

The number of Turkish tribes was so large that, according to Fakhr-i-Mudabbir, it was difficult to identify and count them. Many of them were nomadic and went on moving from place to place. He has, however, named some sixty-four tribes of significant status. In this list the following names may be particularly noted:

> *Yamak, Qirgiz, Qarlagh, Chikal, Kharlagh, Qanaq, Khalij, Khata, Kimak, Khazar, Qarakhazar, Khafjaq, Aghul, Tatar, Qanqali, Ghuzz, Qaraghur, Yaghma, Qiq, Salghir, Yughuz, Afshar.*[4]

Strangely enough, the Ilbari tribe—to which all sultans from Iltutmish to Kaiqubad belonged—is not included in this list. Minhaj, however, refers to it as one of the important Turkish tribes, bracketed with the Khifchaq, the Qankuli, the Yamak, the Rus, the Charkas and the As tribes.[5]

The members of the Ilbari tribe claimed a status of tribal headship. They prided in tracing their pedigree to Afrasiyab,[6] who is depicted in Iranian traditions as a formidable warrior and skilful general. He was an arch-enemy of Iran. In the *Shah Namah* of Firdausi he is portrayed as a firm, shrewd and resourceful king who presents the Iranians with a "redoubtable and worthy enemy".

E. Yarshatar is of the opinion that the identification of the Turanians, the rival Iranian tribe, with the Turks, and Afrasiab with their king, is a late development, possibly made in the early seventh century. He remarks:

> "the . . . Turks themselves cultivated the legends of Afrasiab as a Turkish hero after they had come into contact with the Iranians.... The high status of Afrasiab among the Turks is reflected in the fact that some Turkish dynasties such as the Qarakhanids (sometimes called Al-i Afrasiab) and the Saljuqs claimed descent from him."[7]

Iltutmish belonged to the Ilbari tribe[8] and Balban also claimed this origin. Minhaj writes about Balban and his cousin Sher Khan:

> "Their lineage was from the Khans of the Ilbari and, when the infidel Mughals acquired predominance over the countries of Turkistan and the tribes of Khifchaq, as a matter of necessity, it became incumbent on them to remove, with their families, dependents, and effects, from their accustomed place of abode."[9]

In a *qasida* (panegyric) in praise of Balban, Minhaj says:

> "To the Shahryar of the Universe, Ulugh Khan, he who is Khan of the Ilbari, the Shah of the Yamak."[10]

Yamak was the name of a ruler and a beautiful town in Turkistan[11] also bore this name. Some say that it was the title applied to the sovereign of the Ighur, but Raverty has contradicted this view.[12] It was in all probability the name of a tribe as Minhaj has mentioned it along with some other tribes, like Qifchaq, Ilbari etc.[13]

Tribal relationship of Balban with Iltutmish is not free from doubt. Perhaps in his anxiety to consolidate his family position, Balban forged links with the House of Iltutmish: (a) he married a daughter of Iltutmish,[14] (b) gave one of his daughters in marriage to Sultan Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud,[15] and (c) to further augment his status and position claimed to be a member of the same tribe.

The names of the ancestors of Iltutmish and Balban, as given by Minhaj, show that perhaps they were not yet converted to Islam.[16] In fact no definite semantic analysis of these names is possible.

Iltutmish's father was called Eil Khan or Yelem Khan.[17] In the Turkish language the word *eil* means:

(i) a tribe, people, or nation;
(ii) a sub-division of a great general tribe, called *ulus*;
(iii) the country of any particular tribe; and
(iv) antelope, a buck, a wild ox.

The word *yelem* means mucilage, gum or glue.[18]

Early ethnic history of the Turkish tribes shows that both individuals and tribes were named after some animals or phenomena of nature. An ancestor of Balban was known as Abar Khan.[19] In the Persian language *abar* means cloud but in Turkish *eberr* means good, pious, just.[20]

Minhaj says: "The father of Malik Nusrat-u'd-din, Sher Khan-i-Sunkar and the father of Ulugh Khan-i-Azam were born of one father and one mother."[21] Further he says: "The father of these two was of the seed of Abar Khan, the Ilbari, and he was the Khan of about 10,000 families and their affinity to the Ilbari (tribe) of Turkistan is well known among the tribes of Turks."[22] It appears that Iltutmish and his three slaves—Ulugh Khan (future Balban), his brother and their cousin, Sher Khan[23] belonged to the same tribe.

These rulers were racially Turks but culturally they were Iranians. Their political thought was nurtured in Iranian traditions, operating both as a historical incident and as a political necessity. More than their ethnic origin, they were proud of being the bearers of the traditions of the Iranian heroes. When Minhaj refers to Iltutmish, the real founder of the sultanate of Delhi as "*Faridun fur, Qubad nihad, Ka'os namus,*

Sikandar daulat, Bahram shaukat"[24] his whole concept of greatness seems to revolve round the ancient heroes of Iran. He could not visualize greatness, glory or grandeur apart from the Iranian pantheon. When Fakhr-i-Mudabbir considers the duties and obligations of kings, his mind goes back again and again to Persian and legendary heroes, like Kaimurs, Kaiqubad, Kaikhusrau, etc.[25] To strengthen his argument he cites traditions of the Prophet and adds a religious veneer to his political assessments. Amir Khusrau called Kaiqubad "heir to the crown of Kaiyan."[26]

These early sultans of Delhi planned their courts on the Iranian model, adopted Iranian customs and ceremonials and drew inspiration from the *wasaya* of Iranian heroes in organizing their administrative institutions. *Shah Namah* was constantly read out at the court of Prince Muhammad, son of Balban, in Multan.[27] Somehow, the belief had developed that kingship was not possible without emulating Iranian traditions of royalty. Barani observes:

> "Consequently, it became necessary for the rulers of Islam to follow the policy of the Iranian Emperors in order to ensure the greatness of the True World, the supremacy of the Muslim religion, the power of Truth, the suppression and overthrow of the opponents and enemies of the Faith, the execution of the orders of religion and the maintenance of their own authority."[28]

The Sassanid kings had (1) emphasized the divine basis of their authority; (2) created unbridgable distance between the royalty and the *raiyyat*; (3) considered conversing with the common man derogatory to the dignity of a king; (4) emphasized dignified parts of kingship so much that their crown, which was kept hanging over their heads, became several *maunds* heavy with embellishments.[29]

The Turkish sultans, particularly Balban, followed these traditions meticulously and in every detail. His crown was said to be a yard in length from its top to the tip of his beard.[30] He gave Iranian names—Kaiqubad, Kaimurs, Kaikaus, Kaimurs—to his grandsons born after his accession to the throne.

Efforts were also made to sustain ideologically this commitment to Iranian traditions. A number of *wasaya* collections[31] of doubtful authenticity were in circulation in the markets. Books on rules of kingship—like *Adab-us-Salatin* and *Ma'asir-us-Salatin* were obtained from Baghdad.[32]

Since direct claim of divinity was not possible in Muslim society,[33] the idea came through the back-door. The sultans called themselves

"shadow of God on earth" (*zill ullah fil arz*). Minhaj calls Iltutmish *Zillullah fil 'alamin*[34] (God's shadow on the worlds). Khusrau addressed Kaiqubad as *Saya-i-Yazdan-i-Pak*[35] (shadow of Holy God).

'Utbi quotes the phrase *zill ullah fil arz* as a genuine *Hadith* in his *Kitab-i-Yamini*. His commentator, al-Manini, says that it was transmitted by Tirmizi and others as going back to Ibn 'Umar.[36] There is no proof, philological or otherwise, to show that the word *sultan* was ever used during the time of the Prophet in the sense of a specific political authority. Hence all the traditions in which the title *sultan* occurs are later fabrications.

The early Turkish tribes that reached India when the sultanate was taking shape, soon wove themselves into a compact governing class, and came to be known as *Turkan-i-Chahlgani*. They jealously guarded their privileged position in the state but the several following factors gradually reduced their hold on the administration: (i) Immigrant families from Central Asian lands came to India and were awarded administrative assignments by Iltutmish, (ii) Turkish slaves of Iltutmish gradually rose to positions of power and authority, and challenged the authority of *Turkan-i-Chahlgani*; (iii) some Mongol amirs who had settled in India during the time of Balban and Jalal-u'd-din Khalji and had embraced Islam, began to aspire for positions of authority in the sultanate; (iv) some Indian-born Maliks, like 'Imad-u'd-din Raihan, came to occupy important positions in administration; and (v) the Afghan tribes also began to infiltrate. As the early Turkish rule came to an end, the Indian-born nobility—both Muslim and Hindu began to assert its position. It increased in number with the passage of time. The rise of Khaljis to power was made possible by the support of this element in the body politic.

The origin of the Khaljis is controversial on account of some cryptic remarks of Barani. Referring to the overthrow of the Ilbarite power and the rise of Khaljis, he wrote:

> "As the people of Delhi had for 80 years prospered under the rule of the Turks the government of the Khaljis appeared to them intolerable."[37]

Naturally the impression gained ground that the Khaljis were of some different ethnic origin from the Ilbarites. If one added the word 'Ilbari' with 'Turks' in the above sentence, the confusion would disappear. This would be perfectly in keeping with Barani's style: he uses generic terms where specific ones are required.[38] What Barani really wanted to convey was that when power passed out of the hands

of the Ilbarites who had won the confidence of the people, there was general resentment and dismay at this development.

Nizam-u'd-din Bakhshi considered the Khaljis to be the descendants of Qalij Khan, a son-in-law of Chingiz Khan, who had migrated to Ghur with his followers, numbering about 30,000.[39] Badaoni has rejected this view.[40] According to *Seljuq Namah*, as cited by Nizam-u'd-din, the Khaljis descended from Turk, son of Japhet, son of Noah.[41]

The Turkish origin of the Khaljis is established by the available historical evidence. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir who made special enquiries about the genealogies and ethnic origins of tribes considers Khalj the eleventh tribe of the Turks.[42] The anonymous author of *Hudud al-Alam*, Ibn Hauqal (*Kitab al-Masalik wa'l Mamalik*) and Istakhri (*Masalik wa'l Mamalik*) refer to them as Turks. The Khalj tribe initially lived in western Turkistan. Later, it moved to eastern Afghanistan, perhaps during the pre-Mongol Islamic period.

Ibn Khurradazbih (*Kitab al-Masalik wa'l Mamalik*) includes Khaljis in the list of Turkish tribes inhabiting the Central Asian steppes. He says that their winter quarters were beyond the Syr Darya in the Talas region, adjacent to the lands of the Karluk, but that they also lived "on this side of the Oxus" i.e. to its south and west. Barthold refers to Khalj as a Turkish tribe which in the fourth century lived between Seistan and India. Some modern writers (like Raverty and Elphinstone) are of the opinion that the Khaljis were Turks but having stayed for long in Afghanistan became assimilated with the indigenous population and were taken to be more Afghan than Turk.[43]

According to 'Utbi, Mahmud of Ghaznin recruited soldiers of the Khalj tribes in his army.[44] Khalj tribes from Zabulistan were utilised by the Ghurids in their campaigns and Sultan Ghiyas-u'd-din Mahmud succeeded to power in Firuz Koh in 1206 with the help of the Khaljs.[45]

The Khaljis were found on the Indian political scene on many crucial occasions. Shihab-u'd-din Ghuri's life at the first battle of Tara'in was saved by a Khalji cavalryman. The most outstanding Khalji military leader in medieval India was Muhammad bin Bakhtyar Khalji who conquered Bengal. Mahmud Khalji who founded the Khalji dynasty of Malwa (1486-1531) was related to Jalal-u'd-din Khalji's eldest brother, Nasir-u'd-din.[46] Thus, for about three hundred years, the Khalji ethnic group enjoyed a prestigious position in the polity. Military adventurism of Bakhtyar and 'Ala-u'd-din considerably elevated the ethnic position and prestige of the Khaljis.

Some writers have identified the Khaljis with the Ghilzais. Raverty

has objected to this identification. Wolseley Haig however remarks: "If the Ghilzais are not Khiljis it is difficult to say where the latter are to be sought."

Minorsky is of the opinion that the language spoken by the Khalj was a dialect of the Turkish language.[47] The name of Jalal-u'd-din Khalji's father is given as *Yaghrosh*[48] which is obviously a Turkish name.

There has been some controversy about the origin of the Tughluqs[49] also. Is it a tribal, family or a personal name? Except Sultan Ghiyas-u'd-din and Sultan Muhammad, no other sultan of the dynasty used it as a suffix to his name. Archaeological and numismatic evidence also corroborate this. Had it been a family name all the members of the dynasty would have used it. Its use by Sultan Muhammad is to indicate parentage.[50] This is borne out by the *Qasa'id* of Badr Chach,[51] commentary on the *Banat Sa'ad*,[52] the *Basatin-ul-Uns* of Hasan Dabir,[53] the *Futuhat* of Firuz Shah,[54] the *Insha* of Mahru[55] and other contemporary works.

Ferishta considers *Tughluq* to be an Indian corruption of Qutlugh.[56] But this is hardly plausible because we come across in contemporary history many persons of this name.

According to Ibn Battuta the Tughluq sultans belonged to the Qarauna tribe.[57] Marco Polo describes the Qaraunas (Caraonas or Karaunah) as a people of mixed breed.[58] Yule thought that Marco Polo was misled by the term *Qaraun* (Karaun) which in Mongol parlance meant dark children of mixed breed, born of Mongol fathers and black mothers.[59] Qaraun, according to him, is derived from Qara, meaning black. Mizk thought that Qarauna was connected with the Sanskrit *karana* which means 'of mixed caste', the father being Ksatriya and mother Sudra.[60]

The use of contemptuous terms for children of mixed breed was not unusual. In India the term *baysar* was used for children born of an Arab father and or Indian mother.[61]

According to Ellias and Ross,[62] the term *qaraunah* or *qarawana* was a term of reproach. It was contemptuously used for the Chaghtais. Perhaps it was out of contempt that Ibn Battuta used this term for the Tughluqs. Mir Khwand refers to the Qaraunahs as a tribe forming a special division in the Mongol army.[63]

Some writers have expressed the opinion that this tribe was of Mongol origin. But this is highly improbable. Muhammad bin Tughluq's attitude towards the Mongols, his attempts to organize *jihad* against them, leave one in no doubt that he had no ethnic connection with them.

Badr-i-Chach has traced Sultan Muhammad's pedigree to Bahram Gor (246-93), the fifth king of the Sassanid dynasty. Badr-i-Chach being a court poet, this seems to be the official position of the genealogy of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq.

In the later phase of the Tughluq dynasty, the country was actually controlled by disgruntled and ambitious elements of the nobility, belonging to different ethnic groups. The Sayyids could enlist in their support a few loyal and competent officers, but did not succeed in creating a nobility, homogeneous in its composition and loyal in its disposition. There appeared a range of persons who exercised varying degrees of control over their respective areas—*amirs, maqta's, zabits* and *zamindars*, and the sultan realized different types of revenues—*mahsul, mal, khidmati* and *kharaj* from them. This heterogeneity in administration resulted in the destruction of any sense of political solidarity, and centrifugal tendencies became rife and rampant. The Sayyid ruler with his nebulous title of *rayat-i-a'ala* (royal standard) was nothing more than a glorified *iqta'dar*.[64]

The claim of the Sayyid rulers to be associated with the family of the Prophet is not free from serious doubt. Yahya Sirhindi says that it was reported that Khizr Khan, the founder of the dynasty, was a Sayyid.[65] But his statement is based on two considerations: first, Sayyid Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari Makhdum-i-Jahanian, the famous Suhrawardi saint, had once referred to Malik Sulaiman, an adopted son of Malik Nasir-ul-Mulk Mardan Daulat as a Sayyid and, secondly, Khizr Khan possessed the moral qualities of a Sayyid. Both these arguments show that Yahya Sirhindi himself was not sure of the validity of this claim. Next to the Khaljis, the Sayyid dynasty had the shortest duration of rule—37 years. Its life history is characterized neither by the bold imperialistic achievements of the Khaljis, nor by the tough administrative experiments of the Tughluqs. The Sayyid sultans did not have any ideal of establishing an empire. In fact their political vision was confined to a radius of some two hundred miles round Delhi.[66] They hardly enjoyed any ethnic solidarity.

The Lodi sultans were of Afghan origin. Sir Wolseley Haig was of the opinion that: "The Lodis were Khaljis or Ghilzais, Turks by origin but so long resident in Afghanistan that by the fifteenth century they could be correctly described as Afghans."[67] Longworth Dames considered the Lodis distinct from the Ghilzais, but closely allied to them.[68] In fact the Lodis were lateral kinsmen of the Surs, the Niazis and the Nuhanis, all of whom were allied to the Ghilzais. The Ghilzais were an admixture of Tajek or Turkish blood.

One of the early figures in Afghan tradition was Qais who lived in the hilly tract round the Sulaiman mountains. It was to him that the Lodis traced their genealogy. Their martial qualities attracted the attention of Subuktigin who enrolled them in his army.[69] During the Ghurid conflict with Prithvi Raj, the Afghans are reported to have fought on both sides.[70] This shows that perhaps they were not fully converted to Islam. The early Turkish sultans of Delhi used them for garrisoning the outposts.[71] Isma'il Afghan, Gul Afghan, Shahu Afghan, and others came to India during the Tughluq period.[72] Gradually the Afghans consolidated their position and under Muhammad bin Tughluq an Afghan provincial chief declared himself sultan in Daulatabad.[73] During the reign of Firuz Shah, Malik Bir Afghan was appointed governor of Bihar.[74] When central authority became weak after the death of Firuz Shah Tughluq and fissiparous tendencies appeared, Khizr Khan enrolled Sultan Shah Lodi along with other Afghan soldiers in his service. A number of Afghan tribes—Surs, Nuhanis, Niazis and Lodis turned to India and settled here. Under the Sayyids, many important *iqtas* were held by the Afghans. When Bahlul occupied the throne of Delhi, the Afghans constituted a powerful faction in the politics of northern India. Bahlul belonged to a merchant family which carried on horse trade.[75] Dr. R.P. Tripathi has rightly remarked: "Bahlul was at best the chief leader of the Afghan tribes and not a king of all the people in his kingdom."[76]

All these dynasties which were at the helm of affairs during the Sultanate period possessed some distinctive features, born of the circumstances in which each one of them worked its way to the throne, the nature of support it enjoyed from the bureaucracy, the religious classes, and the surviving *amirs* of the displaced house. The charismatic nature of Iltutmish's authority developed such attachment with his house that though there were many *coups*, never for a moment people thought of placing any one on the throne of Delhi if he was not related to Iltutmish. It was under these circumstances that Balban had thought of various ways to establish his links with the House of Iltutmish.

The Turks displayed innovative courage of thought and freedom of action when they raised Raziya to the throne and accepted Kaiqubad as ruler when his father, Bughra Khan, was alive. The Turks thus brought about an interesting compromise between hereditary rights of a family with the principle of election.

The trends and tendencies arising out of loyalty to a dynasty, initiated by the Ilbarites, could be crushed by force alone. The Khalji

militarism was a logical reaction to the Ilbarite concepts of royalty. With 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji began the era of imperialism and his display of strength that made people submit to his authority. He never claimed obedience on the basis of legitimacy, religious sanctions or heredity. It was but inevitable under the circumstances that admission to the governing class became broad-based. 'Ala-u'd-din's militarism needed men of talent, irrespective of tribal, religious or ethnic affiliations. He recruited his military officers and governors from among the Indians. Men like Malik Kafur won his confidence by their devoted service to the state, extension of its frontiers and by forcing the Indian rajas to recognize the suzerainty of the sultan. But in the medieval context, a governing class, ethnically compact and collectively loyal to the ruler, was a *sine qua non*. The rise of Khusrau Khan exposed the inherent weakness of the 'Alai system. In these conditions Shaikh Bashir, a contemporary religious figure, was not wrong when he remarked: "The kingdom of 'Ala-u'd-din had no foundations."[77] Khusrau Khan's failure to retain power for long showed that only a well-organized ethnic group with its roots in military organization and support from the provincial governors could succeed in establishing itself in India.

The Tughluqs succeeded in establishing themselves because they had long military experience in the north-western frontier region. Their effective defence of the country against the Mongol inroads at a very critical moment had established their military reputation. Besides, the provincial governors, despite all jealousies and rivalries, preferred the Tughluqs to other contenders of power. Further, the Tughluqs created favourable conditions for themselves by invoking the religious feelings of the people.

Muhammad bin Tughluq's strict adherence to religious law in personal life combined with religious cosmopolitanism was remarkable. He subscribed to the ideas of Ibn Taimiyya both in his religious and political approach. On the one hand, Ibn Taimiyya had strongly rebutted dichotomy between State and religion and on the other he had propounded a very liberal and tolerant approach towards the non-Muslims. His *Risala-i-Qabrasiya* was characterized by tolerance and goodwill towards the non-Muslims. Muhammad bin Tughluq developed the best of relations with the Hindu philosophers, religious men and nobles. He appointed Hindus, like Ratan[78] (governor of Sehwan, Swistan), Manak Sultani[79] (*muqti* of Ajmer), Kishan Bazran Indri[80] (*muqti* of Awadh), Dhara[81] (*naib wazir* of Deogir) and some others to important administrative posts. He recruited a large number of Rajput

clansmen of the Doab in his army.[82] Besides, he encouraged the class of nobility known as *Amiran-i-Sada*[83] (the centurions) to strengthen his position. Foreigners like Amir Nauroz, son-in-law of Tarmashirin, also joined his army.[84] This policy of admitting diverse ethnic groups into the circle of nobility brought about a change in the character and role of the governing class and created resentment in the old nobility whose pre-eminent position received a serious setback. Barani contemptuously refers to the officers sent to Daulatabad after the recall of Qutlugh Khan as belonging to the families of vintners, singers, barbers, weavers, gardeners, cooks etc.,[85] but his real resentment was to the admission of non-Muslims and foreigners to positions of authority. This change in the character of the governing class and its ethnic and tribal composition influenced subsequent developments in Indian polity.

References

1. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah*, p. 19.
2. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir undertook to compile his *Bahr-ul-Ansah*, only a part of which has been published, in order to construct genealogical history of the ruling dynasties. He says that in Lahore alone he could consult one thousand books on the subject (p. 66). Even if so many books were available to him on genealogy, it seems that apart from general observations he could not find any specific or detailed account about the royal background of the early sultans.
3. Dow and Briggs spread that misunderstanding. Edward Thomas gave to his book the title *The Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi*. Raverty has criticised Dow and Briggs for this error. See his article "Who were the Pathan Sultans of Delhi?" *JRASB*, 1875, pp. 24-38.
4. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah*, p. 47.
5. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Habibi edition, vol. II, pp. 175-76; Raverty, pp. 1169-70.
6. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shaai*, p.37. See also *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah*, p. 36.
7. *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, p. 576.
8. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Habibi edition, vol. I, p. 441. See also *Turkiye Diyanet Vakfi Islam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. X, pp. 478-79.
9. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Habibi, vol. II, p. 45; Raverty, p. 796.
10. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Habibi, vol. II, 220.
11. Habibi, vol. II, fn 220; Raverty, fn, p. 961. Amir Khusrau refers to it as a territory (*arsa-i-yamak*), *Nuh Sipihr*, p. 176.
12. Raverty, p. 961, fn.
13. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Habibi, vol. II, pp. 175-76.
14. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, p. 22.
15. See *Salatin-i-Dehli Kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 146-47.
16. Cf. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah*, p. 21.
17. In one MS it is Eil Khan, in another it is Yelem Khan, *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Habibi, vol. I, p. 441.

18. J.W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, Constantinople, 1884, part I, p. 303.
19. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Habibi, vol. II, p. 47; Raverty, p. 800. Raverty has noted with surprise that the name of Ulugh Khan's father has not been mentioned by Minhaj.
20. Redhouse, op. cit., part II, p. 2209.
21. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Habibi, vol. II, p. 47; Raverty, p. 800.
22. Ibid.
23. Raverty, p. 491.
24. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, vol. I, p. 440.
25. *Adab-ul-Harb*, pp. 1-23.
26. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, p. 22.
27. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 67.
28. *Fatawa-i-Jahandari*, English trans., p. 39.
29. For details, A. Christensen, *L'Iran Sous Les Sasanides*, Urdu translation by Muhammad Iqbal, *Iran dar ahd-i-Sassanian*, Delhi, 1941.
30. Fazuni Astarabadi, *Buharia*, Iran, 1328 AH, p. 12.
31. See Barani, *Fatawa-i-Jahandari* for a number of such treatises circulating in Delhi.
32. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 144-45.
33. See Nizami, *State and Culture in Medieval India*, pp. 143-44.
34. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, p. 165.
35. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, p. 205.
36. *Sharh al-Yamini*, Cairo, 1286, vol. I, p. 21.
37. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 171-75.
38. Cf. Moreland, *The Agrarian System of Moslem India*, pp. 32, 225; Nizami, *On History and Historians of Medieval India*, p. 140.
39. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, vol. I, p. 116.
30. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, vol. I, p. 167.
41. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, vol. I, p. 116.
42. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah*, p. 47.
43. For the origin of the Khaljis, see Professor S.A. Rashid's article in *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1938, pp. 297-303; K.S. Lal, *History of the Khaljis*, pp. 9-13.
44. *Kitab-ul-Yamini*, Lahore ed., pp. 21-26.
45. Raverty, vol. I, p. 397.
46. See T.W. Haig's article on '*Khaljis' in the Encyclopaedia of Islam*, first ed., pp. 876-78.
47. "The Turkish Dialect of Khalj", *BSOS*, X, 1940, pp. 417-37.
48. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 61.
49. Thus in Ibn Battuta (*Rihla*, II, pp. 30, 34). Wolseley Haig has accepted this form. *JRAS*, July 1922. It has been differently spelt as *Tughlaq* by Moreland (*Agrarian System*, p. 45); *Taghlik* by A. Stein (*Ruins of Desert Cathay*, I, p. 180), *Taghlak* by Lane-Poole (*Medieval India*, p. 12).
50. Cf. Thomas, *Chronicles*, pp. 212-16.
51. Kanpur ed., 1268 AH, pp. 49, 51, 56, 57 ff.
52. I.O. MS, 2646 f. 104-5.
53. B.M. Add 7717.
54. I.O. MS transcribed by Zia-u'd-din Nayyar-i-Rakhshan, p. 3.
55. Ed. S.A. Rashid, Lahore, 1965, p. 25.
56. *Tarikh-i-Ferishta*, Newal Kishore ed., p. 130.
57. *Rehla*, II, pp. 30-31.
58. Yule, *Marco Polo*, pp. 98-99.
59. Ibid., p. 101.

60. *Die Reise des Arabers Ibn Batuta durch Indien and China*, p. 97.
61. Mas'udi, *Muruj-uz-Zahab*, II, p. 131; see also Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi, *Arab O Hind Kay Ta'alluqat*, p. 281.
62. *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, Eng. trans., pp. 75-79.
63. *Rauzat-us-Safa*, vol. V, p. 96.
64. For details, Nizami's article on Sayyids in *Comprehensive History of India*, vol. V, pp. 630 et seq.
65. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 182.
66. See Nizami in *Comprehensive History of India*, vol. V, p. 630.
67. *The Cambridge History of India*, vol. III, p. 224, fn. 2.
68. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. I, (1913 edn.), p. 149.
69. 'Utbi, *Kitab-ul-Yamini*, Labore ed., pp. 21-6.
70. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. I, p. 151; Habibullah, *The Foundation of Muslim Rule in India*, p. 58.
71. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 57-58.
72. Ibid., pp. 482-98.
73. Ibid., p. 514.
74. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 133.
75. The Sulaiman mountains were known for horse-breeding. C.E. Bosworth remarks: "Many of the most famous breeding grounds for horses in eastern Islam fell within the Ghaznavid sphere of influence. The Sulaiman mountains to the west of the Indus have a very long history as a horse-breeding area, and the name of the Afghans mentioned by Biruni as living in the Western frontier mountains of India...." *The Ghaznavids*, p. 113.
76. *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration in India*, p. 84.
77. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 378.
78. *Rehla*, II, p. 5.
79. *Epigraphia Indica*, Supplement, 1967, p. 12.
80. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 505.
81. Ibid., p. 501.
82. Ibid., p. 477.
83. Mahdi Husain, *Rise and Fall of Muhammad bin Tughluq*, pp. 224-25. The view that this class was created by Muhammad bin Tughlaq is not correct. We find reference to *Amiran-i-Sada* in *Qir'an-u's-Sa'dain* of Amir Khusrau (p. 18, Int.).
84. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 533.
85. Ibid., p. 505.

CHAPTER 2

Names and Nomenclature

The dynasties that ruled northern India during the early medieval period have been designated as Mu'izzi, Qutbi and Shamsi, on the basis of their slave-master relationship. But this classification loses sight of the ethnic origin of the dynasties. Since the two chief rulers of the thirteenth century—Iltutmish and Balban—were Ilbarite Turks, the dynasty may appropriately be called Ilbarite after their ethnic origin.

The use of the term "slave-kings" for the early Turkish sultans is a misnomer because they were not slaves when they ascended the throne. The term 'Mameluk' is better as it signifies a slave born of free parents, but the connotation of slavery nevertheless persists. All the dynasties that followed the Ilbarites, have been likewise designated after their ethnic background. The earliest historian to use ethnic background for dynastic categorization was Barani.

It is not always easy to decide as to what part of a ruler's name refers to his family, what his titles were before and after assumption of power, and the Indian and the Turkish component in them. Aibek has been mentioned as 'Sultan Qutb-u'd-din Aibek, al-Mu'izzi, al-Sultani'.[1] Was Aibek his name or tribal surname?

Aibek was a Turkish tribe. The famous Urdu poet Ghalib traced his genealogy to the Aibek tribe and said:

Aibekaim az jama'a-i Atrak
Dar tamami zi mah deh chandaim.
(We belong to the Aibek branch of the Turks. This is why we are ten times more in beauty than the moon.)

The word *Aibek* is said to be a compound of two Turkish terms: *ai* (meaning moon) and *bak* (meaning lord). The rationale for this name was that the tribe was known for the attractive features of its members. Semantically the word *Aibek* is used in different senses: a slave, a messenger, an idol or a beloved.[2] Jalal-u'd-din Rumi has used the word in his *masnavi* in the sense of a slave or a messenger:

Guft ay aibek biawar an rasan
Ta biguyam man jawab-i Bul Hasan.

Amir Khusrau writes about different varieties of bows as follows:

> *Gah Tatari shawad, gah Chachi*
> *Gahi Aibek buwad gahi Lachi.*[3]
> (It means that a type of bow was also known as *Aibek*.)

We come across several persons by the name of *Aibek* in the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*.[4]

In his early years Aibek was called *Aibek-i-shil*,[5] the reason being that he had a fractured finger. It would be wrong to think that *Aibek-i-shil* means one with fractured fingers,[6] as *Timur-Lang* does not mean one with a broken leg. Only the words *shil* and *lang* refer to the deformity.

Qutb-u'd-din was perhaps the title adopted by him after his accession to the throne. During the medieval period the use of such titles was not uncommon. Iltutmish was called Shams-u'd-din; his son Firuz was known as Rukn-u'd-din; Bahram was called Mu'izz-u'd-din; Mas'ud was 'Ala-u'd-din; Mahmud was Nasir-u'd-din and so on. Among the sultans of Delhi, Muhammad bin Tughluq, was the only ruler who did not adopt any such title because he thought that there was nothing more prestigious than the name Muhammad.

Iltutmish's name and titles generally appear as follows: *al-Sultan al-Mu'azzam, Shahryar-i 'Azam, Shams-u'd-dunya wa'd-din, Zillullah fil 'alamin, Abul Muzaffar Iltutmish al-Sultan yamin Khalifatullah, Nasir-i-Amir-ul-Muminin*.[7] (The great sultan, the supreme monarch, Shams-ud-Dunya wa'd-din, the shadow of God in the worlds, Abul Muzaffar, Iltutmish, the sultan, the right arm of the Viceregent of God, the aider of the Lord of the Faithful.) However on the *mihrab* of 'Idgah at Palwal his name occurs as follows:[8]

> *"Sayyid al-salatin al-Turk wa'l 'Ajam*
> *Yamin-ul-Islam wa'l Muslimin Kahf*
> *al-muluk wa'l Salatin abul ma'ali Iltutmish*
> *al-Qutbi Khalad Allah Mulkohu-wa sultanohu."*

The indication of his slave-relationship in this inscription is significant. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir refers to the name of the sultan with other epithets and titles, which did not form part of his name.[9]

The adoption of the epithet *Abul Muzaffar* by Iltutmish refers to his glorious achievements as a conqueror. The Palwal inscription alone gives his *kunyat* (patronymic connection) as *Abul Ma'ali*[10]; everywhere else it is *Abul Muzaffar*. Most of the sultans after him called themselves *Abul Muzaffar*, including Balban[11] and Kaiqubad.[12] 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji and Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq were styled as *Abul Muzaffar* even on their

coins.[13] Muhammad bin Tughluq changed it to *Abul Mujahid*[14] which was more in keeping with his revolutionary ideals.

There has been considerable controversy about the orthography of the sultan's name. Persian texts of the works of Hasan Nizami, Fakhr-i-Mudabbir and Minhaj have been differently read and interpreted. Archaeological and numismatic evidence has further complicated the matter. But verses found in the works of Amir Khusrau, Taj-u'd-din Reza, Shihab-u'd-din Muhmara and 'Isami rhyme properly only when the name is pronounced as *Iltutmish*.[15] For instance note the following verse of Minhaj:

> *An Shahansha-ki Hatim bazl-o Rustam Koshish ast*
> *Nasir-u'd-dunya wa din Mahmud bin Iltutmish ast.*[16]

Of the Turkish sources, the *Büyük Lûghat ve Ansiklopedi* pronounces the word as *Iltumus*[17], *Islam Ansiklopedisi* gives *Il-Tutmis*[18], for *Turkiye Diyanet Vakfi Islam Ansiklopedisi* it is *Iltutmis*.[19]

Elphinstone spelt the name as 'Altamish';[20] Elliot as 'Altamsh';[21] Raverty as 'Iyaltimish'[22]. In 1907 Barthold put forward the view that the word was really *Iltutmish*, 'maintainer of the kingdom', and advanced convincing arguments in support of his view. His opinion is confirmed by poetic evidence. Barthold strengthened his view by a reference to a fine manuscript of the *Taj-ul-Ma'athir* (dated 829 AH) in the University Library of St. Petersburg, in which the 'U' vowel is shown.[23]

During the last several decades, following Barthold's opinion, the name of the sultan has been written as Iltutmish. J.A. Boyle prefers to write it as Il-Tutmish.[24] In 1950, Hikmet Bayur discussed the entire question afresh and came to the conclusion that the name is Iletmish.[25] The editors of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* accepted Hikmet Bayur's view. Habibi has discussed the matter in some detail in his two notes,[26] but he was perhaps unaware of Bayur's views. Though he has noted that the sultan's name appears in a variety of ways in inscriptions, coins and manuscripts, he has not been able to explain the phenomenon. While the philological investigations of the Turkish and European scholars on this point are highly valuable, it is difficult to accept any new form of the name of the sultan,[27] unless it fits in with the rhyme requirements of the verses found in the contemporary works and the sultan's surviving inscriptions.

The name Iltutmish, though not very common, is yet found in some Turkish accounts. The name was borne by the Uighur Khan who introduced the Manichaean religion among his people after AD 762.[28]

According to Badaoni, the term *Iltutmish* was used for one "born on the night of eclipse of the moon".[29] This view seems to be based on mere hearsay. Edward Thomas submitted this passage to Redhouse for linguistic scrutiny. His reply, however, was not conclusive.[30]

The Turkish and the Persian lexicons give different meanings of the word *Iltutmish*:

(i) It means sixty.[31]

(ii) It means advance guard of a contingent between the *harawal* and the leader of the army.[32]

(iii) It means conqueror of the world.[33]

This last meaning is confirmed by a verse of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya as quoted in *Fawaid-ul-Fu'ad*:

> *Ba sal-i shash sad wa si wa sah bud kay az Hijrat*
> *Na mand Shah-i-Jahan Shams Din 'Alamgir.*[34]
> (It was in 633 AH that Shams-u'd-din, the ruler of the world, and the conqueror of the world expired.)

Balban's account in *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* is given among the Turkish nobles under the following caption:

> *al-Khaqan ul-Mu'azzam al-a'zam Baha-ul-Haqq*
> *wa'd-din Ulugh Khan-i-Balban us Sultani.*[35]

The title *Qutlugh Khan Baha-ul-Haqq wa'd-din* occurs on the Aligarh inscription of Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud.[36] Barani called him *Sultan al-Mu'azzam*[37] out of regard for him. It appears *Baha-ul-Haqq Balban* was his name; *Ulugh Khan* was the title during the days of his khanate; *Ghiyath-u'd-din* was added to his name after his accession in conformity with the tradition referred to above. While Iltutmish refers to himself as *al-Qutbi* in Palwal inscription, we do not find Balban calling himself *al-Shamsi* in his inscriptions, though in his conversation with his son he repeatedly referred to himself as *banda-i-Shamsi*.[38]

Turkish scholars pronounced this word as Balaban.[39] Persian lexicographers have accepted both the forms—Balban or Balaban.[40]

Persian lexicons define the work Balban as *khurfat* (autumnal fruit, purslain). Some scholars give *parpahn* as a synonym. *Portulaca oleracea* is used in salads and sometimes as a pot-herb or for pickling. There is nothing unusual in this name, because in Turkish society of those days individual names referred to fruits or phenomena of nature.

The names of other sultans of Delhi were mostly simple Persian or Arabic names without any orthographical ambiguity. In fact, the Turkish tradition to which the Ilbarite sultans had adhered so far,

disappeared after Balban. The process of Indianization of names had started very early. We find a cousin of Sultan Balban being called Malik Chajju. He was so popular with this title that even Amir Khusrau addressed him by it in his verses.

Turkish names become rare after the end of the Ilbarite regime. However, now and then some names with Turkish origin appear.

Jalal-u'd-din Khalji's name was Firuż, but his father's name, as suggested by Yahya Sirhindi[41], was Yoghresh Khan. But there is some difficulty in accepting it. We find the title Yoghresh Khan being conferred by him on Malik Khamosh.[42] Had it been his father's name he would not have conferred it on a noble. According to Haji al-Dabir, Afrasiyab, a son-in-law of Chingiz Khan, had three sons. The youngest who was named Tolak Khan had two sons—Nasir-u'd-din and Firuz. The latter served under Balban and seized the throne from the son of Kaiqubad.[43] It is difficult to accept this parentage. One fact however cannot be ignored in this context. Jalal-u'd-din Khalji had married one of his daughters to the Mongol Alghu.[44] Was it due to family connection with Chingiz?

Later names of Persian and Arabic origin became popular. 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji's original name was 'Ali or Garshap.[45] Garshasp was the name of an ancestor of Rustam, and has an Iranian background. Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq named his eldest son Juna which means *chashma-i-aftab* (source of the sun) in Arabic.[46]

Some Turkish terms like *Ikat*[47] (for younger brother) and *Ulugh* (for elder brother, son, or noble) were in current usage. The word *Ulugh* in Turkish meant great and powerful.[48] During the time of Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud, Balban was called Ulugh Khan; similarly, during the time of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji his brother Almas was also called Ulugh Khan; Muhammad bin Tughluq was called Ulugh Khan during the time of his father.

References

1. Raverty, vol. I, p. 512. According to Habibi (vol. I, p. 115) this heading does not occur in the original.
2. See Deh Khuda, *Persian Dictionary*; *Ghiyas-ul-Lughat* and *Farhang-i-Anand Raj*.
3. *Nuh Sipihr*, p. 307.
4. E.g. *Saif-u'd-din Aibek Khatai* (Minhaj, vol. II, p. 28).
5. Raverty, p. 513.
6. Ferishta, vol. I, p. 60; see also Raverty, vol. I, pp. 514-5 fn; *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, vol. II, p. 52 fn.

7. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Habibi, vol. I, p. 440; Raverty, vol. I, p. 597.
8. *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica (1911-12)*, p. 3.
9. *Adab-ul-Harb*, p. 16.
10. See his inscriptions of Farrukh Nagar, Garhmukhtesar, Mangalaur etc. *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica (1911-12)*, pp. 27, 29, 45.
11. *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica (1911-12)*, p. 433; Edward Thomas, *Chronicles*, pp. 134-36.
12. Edward Thomas, *Chronicles*, p. 141.
13. Ibid., pp. 172, 173, 186.
14. Even foreign writers refer to him as *Abul Mujahid*, see, *al-Durar al-Kaminah*, vol. III, p. 460; *Kitab-al-Wafi-bil Wafayat*, vol. III, p. 172.
15. See also, *Comprehensive History of India*, vol V, pp. 209-10, Nizami's article on Iltutmish.
16. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, vol. I, p. 472.
17. Ibid., vol. VI, pp. 284-85.
18. Ibid., p. 975.
19. Ibid., vol. V, p. 3.
20. *History of India*, 5th ed., 1866, p. 371.
21. Elliot and Dowson, vol. II, p. 320.
22. Raverty, p. 597.
23. *ZDMG*, 1907, p. 192.
24. *Tarikh-i-Jahan Gusha*, Eng. tr., vol. I, p. 328.
25. *Belletan*, Ankara, vol. XIV, no. 56, 1950, pp. 567-88; article entitled: "Sultan Iletmis" in *Adi Hakkinda*.
26. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, vol. I, p. 440; vol. II, pp. 376-78.
27. See *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Habibi, vol. II, 376-78; Barthold, *Iltutmys* in *ZDMG*, 1907, pp. 192-93; Nelson Wright, *The Coinage and Metrology of the Sultans of Delhi*, pp. 70 ff.; Simon Digby, "Iletmish or Iltutmish? A Reconsideration of the Name of the Delhi Sultan in Iran," *Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies*, vol. VIII, 1970, pp. 57-64.
28. See F.W.K. Muller, *Uigurica*, II, p. 95 and Marquart, *Sitzungaberichte der Berliner Akademie*, 1912, p. 487. Also *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica*, *1911-12*, p. 21.
29. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, vol. I, p. 62.
30. *Chronicles*, pp. 43-44.
31. Redhouse, vol. I, p. 183; Deh Khuda.
32. Deh Khuda.
33. Deh Khuda, *Farhang-i-Anand Raj, Ghiyas-ul-Lughat*.
34. *Fawaid-ul-Fu'ad*, p. 146.
35. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Habibi, vol. II, pp. 376-79, 417-18.
36. Edward Thomas, *Chronicles*, p. 129. Some of the titles used for Balban in this inscription—like *al-Malik-ul-'Alam, Malik Muluk al-Sharq wa'l Sin*—seem odd. Edward Thomas thought this inscription was written by the Sultan himself because "from the supreme monarch alone could have come such free laudation of the Vizir, in a document bearing their names in close juxtaposition," p. 120. Raverty, p. 799.
37. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 24.
38. Ibid., pp. 99-103.
39. Y. Hikmet Bayur, *Hindustan Tarikhi*, Ankara, 1941, vol. I, p. 296. See also *Turkiye Diyanet Vakfi Islam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. V, p. 3, article by Orhan F. Köprülü.

40. E.g. Deh Khuda.
41. *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi*, p. 61.
42. Haji al-Dabir, *An Arabic History of Gujarat*, edited by D. Ross, p. 755.
43. Ibid., p. 197.
44. Ferishta, p. 94.
45. Amir Khusrau, *Dewal Rani Khizr Khan,* p. 54; 'Isami, *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 224.
46. *Farhang-i-Anand Raj*, vol. I, p. 850.
47. Youngest brother of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji was known as such.
48. Steingass, p. 94.

CHAPTER 3

The Legal and the Actual Sovereign

The sultanate was born out of expediency: it had no legal sanction in Islamic law (*shari'at*). Mawardi has justified the rise of the sultanate on practical and pragmatic grounds. According to him when the realms of *khilafat* became too extensive and central control of distant areas became difficult, farflung parts of the *khilafat* began to assert independence and the office of the sultan and the institution of sultanate came into being. For all practical purposes, these sultans were independent but in order to provide legal semblance to their authority they applied to the caliph for the grant of *manshur* (legal investiture). This provided legal basis to their authority and made rebellion against them illegal. Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna applied to the caliph and obtained *manshur* from him, though he needed no such prop to his authority.

The word *sultan* originally meant power or authority[1] in the abstract sense and was not used for any specific person or institution. It was after the rise of the sultanate as a political organism that the word *sultan* assumed a specific connotation.[2] Al-Subki (ob. 771/1369) informs us that during his time one who ruled over two or more *iqlims* (countries) was called *sultan*; one who exercised authority over only one *iqlim* was called *malik*, while one whose authority was confined to a city or town was called *amir-i-balad*.[3] The word occurs in certain *Ahadith* of the Prophet, but semantic evidence goes against their authenticity. Such *Ahadith* were fabricated obviously to add sanctity to the institution of sultanate, and demand loyalty to the sultan as a religious obligation.

The institution of *khilafat* passed through different phases during the Sultanate period, and changed centres of caliphal authority from Baghdad to Cairo, again back to Baghdad and then to Constantinople.

The following are the phases:

(i) The Abbasid Caliphate functioned from Baghdad till 1258.

(ii) Brief interregnum in which it was not known as to what arrangement of *khilafat* was made after its overthrow by the Mongols.

(iii) Establishment of *khilafat* in Cairo.
(iv) Restoration of *khilafat* in Baghdad.
(v) Rise of the Ottoman Caliphate in 1517.

Iltutmish was the first sultan of Delhi to establish contact with Baghdad and obtain legal investiture (*manshur*), along with caliphal robes, from Abu Ja'far Mansur al-Mustansir Billah (623-40/1226-42), on 22 Rabi'-ul-Awwal 629/1229. This investiture gave a legal basis to the authority of Iltutmish and linked Delhi with Baghdad. Iltutmish celebrated the event with great pomp and plaudits. It was, in fact, a historic occasion which marked the beginning of the legal status of the Ghurid slave-oligarchy and recognized its endeavours to establish an independent sultanate in India. Iltutmish was the first sultan of Delhi with whose name the title *Nasir-i-Amir-ul-Muminin* (Helper of the Caliph) was added.[4]

In 656/1258 Hulagu attacked Baghdad, killed Musta'sim Billah (640-56/1242-58) and put an end to the Abbasid Caliphate. The reaction of the Delhi sultans to this cataclysmic development in the world of Islam was that on the one hand they continued to show loyalty to the *khalifah* and respect to *khilafat* in their coins and sermons, and on the other they avoided for some time direct confrontation with the Mongols, following a policy of non-intervention in Central Asian affairs. This was based on grim political realism. Iltutmish declined asylum to Jalal-u'd-din Mangbarni who was being hotly pursued by Chingiz Khan. He even put to death Mangbarni's envoys. It was a firm indication of the policy of the Delhi sultan not to get involved in Central Asian politics and thereby invite the wrath of the Mongols. But there was another aspect also to this attitude of Iltutmish. Mangbarni had started extending his political influence and began to consolidate his authority in India. This posed a threat to Iltutmish and he decided to clip his wings.

Musta'sim's name remained on the Delhi coins till the end of the reign of Jalal-u'd-din Khalji (695/1296). It, in effect, amounted to saying: "The *khalifah* is dead, long live the *khalifah*".[5] *Khilafat* had such deep roots in the political consciousness of the Mussalmans that they were not prepared to visualize a situation in which they were without a *khalifah*.

The boy king Rukn-u'd-din Ibrahim (ob. 695/1296) was styled merely as *Nasir-i-Amir-ul-Muminin*. 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji continued the tradition but added *Yamin-ul-khalifah* to his titles. The use of the word caliph in some verses for 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji (695/715/1296-1316) by Amir Khusrau and Hasan Sijzi cannot be taken seriously, as no

declaration to that effect was ever made by the sultan. The term was used by them as a synonym for sultan and nothing more. However, when Mubarak Khalji (716-20/1316-20) assumed the title of the *khalifah*, and Delhi came to be designated as *Dar-ul-khalifah*, he indulged in vain pretensions. Nasir-u'd-din Khusrau (720/1320) called himself "friend of the Commander of the Faithful". Keeping his background in view it was simply a device to win public confidence much in the same way as he had done when he called himself *Nasir-u'd-din* (helper of the faith). He was neither a "friend of the Commander of the Faithful", nor a "helper of religion". Apart from giving an impression of being respectful towards traditions which were dear to Muslims, such titles had little practical implications.

Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq (720-25/1320-25) reverted to the old title of *Nasir-i-Amir-ul-Muminin*. His son Muhammad bin Tughluq (725-52/1325-51) took a more serious view of the institution of *khilafat*. Under the influence of Imam Ibn Taimiyya (ob. 1328), he thought that kingship was not justified unless sanctioned by the *khalifah*. He therefore made extensive enquiries about the arrangements made by the Islamic world for the restoration of *khilafat*, and eventually established contact with the caliphate in Cairo.

Broadly speaking, there were two distinct phases in Muhammad bin Tughluq's attitude towards *khilafat*. In the first phase, i.e. up to 731/1340, the name of the *khalifah* does not appear on his coins; instead, the names of the four Pious Caliphs (*khulafa-e-rashidin*) are inscribed along with the *kalima* and some Qur'anic verses. In some coins the phrase meaning "God is rich, you are paupers", occurs; in others, the words "reviver of the traditions of the last of the Prophets" are used for the sultan; in some others we find a phrase meaning: "The land and honour is for God alone". The coins issued from Deogir in 730-34/1329-33, contain such phrases as "Whoever, obeys the Sultan, obeys God" and "Obey God and His Prophet and those with authority amongst you".[6] Perhaps this was done in order to pacify, through recourse to religion, the agitated feelings of the people due to exodus to Deogir. In no coin of this period there is any reference to the *khalifah*.

On the coins minted in 741/1340 only the name of the *khalifah* appears; there is no mention of the sultan.[7] It appears that there occurred a basic ideological change in the sultan due to certain factors like his extensive study of literature on the subject[8], impact of Ibn Taimiyya's ideas through 'Abd-ul-'Aziz Ardbaili[9], and influence of his teacher Qutlugh Khan.[10]

When Muhammad bin Tughluq came to know about the *khalifah*, in Cairo, he sent to him a formal petition requesting the grant of a letter of investiture. He stopped Friday and '*Eid* prayers in the sultanate, and removed his name from the coins till the *manshur* was received from the caliph legalizing his authority.

In 744/1343 Haji Sa'id Sarsari brought a *farman* from the caliph in Cairo. The sultan even went to welcome the emissary outside the city and celebrated the grant of *manshur* with great eclat and enthusiasm. Thereafter, *manshurs* were received from Cairo every year[11] and each time the arrival of envoys was celebrated with public festivities. The sultan's deep attachment to the family of the caliph was expressed in the extraordinary respect shown to Khalifazada Ghiyas-u'd-din.[12] Barani[13], Badr-i-Chach[14] and the anonymous author of *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*[15] speak in glowing language about the sultan's devotion to the *khalifah* and his respect for those related to him.

Firuz Shah Tughluq (750-90/1351-88) also showed deep respect to the *khalifah* and the institution of *khilafat*.[16] In the third year of his reign he received an investiture from the *khalifah* and celebrated the event with great promp and pageant.[17] 'Afif says that the robe of honour came to Firuz Shah from the caliph without his asking for it, while Muhammad bin Tughluq had applied.[18] In 754/1353 Firuz Shah was given the titles *Saif-ul-khilafat* and *Qasim-i-Amir-ul-Muminin* by al-Mu'tazid Billah Abu Bakr bin al-Hakim. In 764/1362 Muhammad Abu Bakr ila Allah sent through Qazi Baha-u'd-din and Khwaja Kafur a *manshur* (investiture) which conferred upon Firuz the government and control of Ceylon, Java, Ma'bar, Kolam, Baknaur, Bengal, Lakhnauti, Telang, Deogir, Gujarat, Delhi, Qarachil, Sind, Kashmir, Mawara-un-Nahr etc.[19] Firuz was called *Sayyid-us-Salatin* (chief of the sultans) in the *manshur*. Those who disobeyed his orders were declared sinners (*'asi*) against the Prophet and God. In effect, this *manshur* determined the limits of the territorial boundaries up to which the sultanate of Firuz Shah Tughluq could expand. It was not based on the actual area of control.

In 760/1358 Sultan Muhammad Bahmani (son of Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Hasan) somehow obtained from the caliph the robe of honour and permission to have his own currency and *khutba*. It amounted to derecognition of Firuz Shah's authority over these areas. Firuz Shah was disturbed at this development which the recalcitrant elements also exploited. Firuz perhaps approached the caliph in this regard and in 766/1364 a fresh *manshur* was received from Mutawakkil ila Allah reiterating confirmation of the entire Indian territory on Sayyid-us-

Salatin Firuz Shah. It is difficult to say whether the Bahmanid ruler had got fabricated a document, or the caliph himself conveniently denied having conferred such an authority on Muhammad Shah Bahmani. Firuz sent Mahmud Shams to the caliph with details of *awqaf* (endowments) which he had made to mosques, *madrasahs, khanqahs* etc. The caliph sent through Mahmud Shams and two of his representatives, Qazi Najm-u'd-din Qureshi and Khwaja Kafur, a *Waqf Namah* by which the entire territory was conferred on Firuz. Firuz Shah got copies of this *Waqf Namah* distributed all over his empire.[20]

After the stormy invasion of Timur, Khizr Khan established his Sayyid dynasty (817-55/1414-51). He however, desisted from assuming royal title and claimed for himself the position of a lieutenant of the conqueror. Shah Rukh later on permitted him to include his name in the Friday sermon (*khutba*). Mubarak and his successors called themselves *naib-i-Amir-ul-Muminin*. The Lodis (855-932/1451-1526) also continued this title appended to their names. In 1517 the Abbasid Caliphate came to an end and the Ottomans assumed the caliphal authority. Ibrahim Lodi ascended the throne in the same year. The sultans of Delhi did not recognize the Ottoman Caliphate.

Thus, during the Sultanate period the *khalifah* was regarded as the legal sovereign, and with the exception of Mubarak Khalji, all other sultans called themselves his lieutenants (*naib*). Legally, they derived their authority from the *khalifah*.

The Actual Sovereign

This legal position apart, the sultans were all powerful. There were, no doubt, some checks imposed by the *shari'at* on their authority, but many of these constraints were ignored by them if they came into conflict with their kingly interests and authority. So long as there was no danger of any violent public reaction, they did not care much for religious restrictions on their authority. 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji gave up the idea of founding a new religion when he was told by 'Ala-ul-Mulk that it would lead to rebellions which "a thousand Buzurchimihrs would not be able to quell."[21]

Thus, in practice what put a check on the unbridled authority of the sultans was fear of rebellion. So far as it did not clash with their kingly interests, they displayed respect for the *shari'at* law. Some rulers kept up the semblance of respect for *shari'at* in public, but many of them flouted *ihtisab* (censorship of morals) rules in their private lives. Sayyid Nur-u'd-din Mubarak Ghaznavi[22], the *Shaikh-ul-Islam* of Delhi who

was reverentially called *Mir-i-Delhi*, criticised the pattern of royal life in one of his lectures at the court of Iltutmish. This criticism was, however, made before a sultan whose personal life was free from many of the blemishes that tarnished the characters of many other rulers of the period.

Sayyid Nur-u'd-din Mubarak told Iltutmish—

> "Whatever the kings do as a necessary obligation of kingship—the way in which they eat and drink wine, the way in which they dress, the way in which they sit, rise or ride, the way in which while sitting on their thrones they make the people stand before them and perform the *sijdah* (prostration) towards them . . . all these things are against the *sunnah* (traditions) of the Prophet and are also *shirk* or claim to a share in God's attributes and will lead to punishment in the next world."[23]

Zia-u'd-din Barani—an erudite scholar of religion and a seasoned political thinker of the period—looked at the administrative structure of the Delhi Sultanate from the twin angles of religion and politics and pointed out the conflict in the state-laws (*zawabit*) and the *shari'at* laws. The pressure of historical forces which his historical imagination could well visualize made him confess that the sultanate could not function without the help of *zawabit* even though they had no sanction in *shari'at*.[24]

Five-fold Classification of Rights and Obligations

The *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* has discussed the rights of a ruler (*wali*) in the light of *Rauzat-ul-Muluk*. It says that a ruler had five rights upon his subjects: (1) obedience of his orders "unless their fulfilment constituted sin under the Law of God"; (ii) offering congregational prayers behind him; (iii) helping him against his enemies; (iv) should not rise against him "whether he be just or cruel"; (v) praying in public for his well-being.

The ruler had five rights upon his army: (i) obedience of his orders in all things except those amounting to disobedience of the laws of God; (ii) should pray for his long life; (iii) should submit to him and should not revile him for delay in the payment of their dues; (iv) should praise his prudence and justice and conceal his defects so that his supporters may be happy and his opponents grieved; (v) should not be away from him lest their presence is urgently required.

The people had five rights upon the rulers: (i) he should dispense justice personally; (ii) should command them rightly; (iii) should prevent one from oppressing the other; (iv) should appoint honest and

truthful officers over them; and (v) should invite them to the path of obedience to God.

Balban's Advice to His Sons

Balban's advice to his sons—Prince Muhammad and Bughra Khan—brings to focus the aims and ideals, as also the methods and style of the functioning of royalty during the early Sultanate period.

Prince Muhammad, a highly cultured prince, was the governor of Multan. Once, when on his annual visit to Delhi, Balban called him to confidential meeting and said that he wished to give some advice to him which was based on his political experience of two *qarns* (generations).[25] "When you ascend the royal throne", he remarked, "you will realise the worth and value of your father's advice". He divided his advice into two broad categories: first, as an ideal one 'for increasing the spiritual status of kings'; and second, a practical one "without which the kingdom will fall into disorder and disintegrate". Under the first category, he dealt with the guidance that a ruler directly received from God as "kingship was viceregency of God" (*niyabat-i-Khuda*). Accordingly, he advised Prince Muhammad "to live according to the laws of the *shari'at* ... give up unlawful acts ... and make sins and unlawful acts more bitter than poison for their devotees." In Balban's eyes, the ideal king was one who "lived with such dignity that his words and his deeds, his movements and his silences, evoked the greatest possible confidence in the people of Islam. He followed the traditions of the ancient kings, his virtuous words and actions pleased God and led to his spiritual elevation and salvation". He particularly emphasized the following duties and obligations of a king:

1. Efforts should be made to ensure justice and equity for people. Oppression and tyranny should be eliminated from the land.
2. Pious and God-fearing *qazis*, *amir-i-dads* and *muhtasibs* should be appointed.
3. The precept "People follow the religion of their kings"[26] should be kept in view. "If the king along with his helpers, supporters, governors and officers, is inclined to justice, generosity, charity, good deeds, virtues, fear of God, obedience, religious devotions, truthfulness and trust, and if they make fear of God, honesty and truth the basic principles of all their administrative actions, then all the people of the country—old and young, men and women, will be inclined to justice, generosity and good deeds, charity, religious devotions, obedience, truthfulness, and right conduct."

4. Maintenance of the dignity of the office of the king both in public and in private is absolutely essential. "Even with reference to your wife and your beloved son, your confidential slaves and slave-girls, you should not discard the dignity of kingship."
5. Maintaining distance from men of low birth and mean qualities.
6. Should look upon "kingship and determination as twin-brothers."
7. Four pillars of kingship to be carefully looked after: (a) equity and justice, (b) army and (civil) servants, (c) treasure, and (d) plenty of reliable supporters.[27]
8. When a person is punished, path should be kept open for reconciliation.
9. There should be no haste in depriving free-born nobles of their honour.
10. No enterprise in which there is a possibility of failure should be undertaken.
11. Should not march in person against every "rootless weakling". This is against the dignity of rulers.
12. No enterprise should be undertaken without consulting the counsellors. "Do not make every body your counsellor."
13. Should be always well informed about the "affairs of sons, brothers, helpers, supporters, governors, officers, army and subjects."
14. Income and expenditure should be controlled. Expenditure should not exceed half the income.[28]
15. Efforts should be made to get more money and more territory "through means permitted by the *shari'at*".
16. The army, the peasants and the merchants should be kept prosperous and satisfied. The king should be their friend.
17. Peace should be maintained on the highways.
18. Path of moderation should be allowed in dealing with the subjects.
19. Palace and court should be full of loyal body-guards, watchmen and protectors.
20. Younger brother should be treated with kindness.[29]

To his second son, Bughra Khan, Balban advised as follows:[30]

1. Consult experienced officers about arranging the affairs of the army.
2. Refrain from drinking.[31] "Whenever the people of a territory find their king, his servants and his soldiers indulging in wine

and mistresses, they also—old and young, men and women, Hindus and Musalmans—get involved in depravities.

3. The king at Delhi should be obeyed. Tributes, presents, letters and trustworthy ambassadors should be regularly sent to Delhi. The responsibilities of kingship are quite different from those of governorship.
4. The state-laws (*qanun*) by which the subjects have been controlled, so far, should not be changed.
5. Peasants should be treated with kindness and consideration. State demands from them should neither be too much, nor too little.
6. The counsellors should be directed to make firm state-laws (*zawabit*).
7. Affairs of the army should be inquired into every day. Expenditure on the army should not be curtailed.
8. Prayers should be offered in congregation.

Bughra Khan's advice to Kaiqubad

Balban's advice to his sons was given under absolutely normal circumstances, but Bughra's advice to his son Kaiqubad was tendered under an entirely anomalous situation. The son was the sovereign and the father was a provincial governor. It was a strange but interesting conjunction of kingship and kinship. In essential details Bughra Khan supported the views of Balban, but there was a slight difference of emphasis. He told his son that "in equity and justice only that ruler can be deemed and considered a king during whose reign no one goes to sleep hungry and naked; such a ruler makes state-laws (*zawabit*) and frames regulations (*mawazin*) so that by the enforcement of their state-laws and regulations no subject of his has to face a distress, which is a danger to his life."[32] This admonition of Bughra Khan brings out the *raison d'être* of state-laws (*zawabit*).

Bughra Khan first expressed his affection for his son and said: "No one wishes another man to be better than himself; the only exception is the father who wishes his son to excel him". He then brought home to him the fact that kingship knew no kinship. "It is the excessive sweetness of kingship," he remarked, "that breaks the tie of affection between father and son. The father kills the son; the son cuts off his father's neck." Implied in this was that he himself was above all such inhuman and cruel feelings.[33] He then advised his son as follows:[34]

1. Pleasure-pursuits destroy a kingdom. Give up indulgence in

Bacchanalian activities. Be careful about your health.

2. Do not destroy the supporters of your government upon any one's advice. By putting to death "some slaves and officers of my father", you have forfeited the confidence of other officers.
3. By killing my elder brother's son you have weakened the foundations of our dynasty. "Apart from us four there were no heirs to the Balbani kingdom. The moment they remove you, this country will go to an other race (*asl*) or another group (*qaum*). . . . Our *harams* will be dishonoured and disgraced. . . ."
4. "How can one who is unaware of his own condition look after the affairs of the kingdom and the country."[35]
5. Stability of the government depends on five things—(i) dispensation of justice; (ii) efficiency of the army; (iii) prosperity of peasantry; (iv) promotion of supporters; (v) perfect intelligence system which kept fully informed about those who are far and near.[36]
6. Proper maintenance of four essential ministries under trustworthy officers—*Diwan-i-Wizarat, Diwan-i-Riyasat, Diwan-i-Arz, Diwan-i-Insha*.[37]
7. Do not violate the state-laws (*zawabit*) established by your grandfather.
8. Offer your prayers regularly and fast during the month of Ramazan.[38] One who does not keep the Ramazan fasts dies young. The permission given by '*ulama-i-duniya* (worldly '*ulama*) to you to give up fasts during the month of Ramazan is mischievous. Seek guidance from '*ulama-i-akhirat* (spiritual scholars) and not from '*ulama-i-duniya* (worldly scholars),[39] who hanker after worldly glory by giving such misleading *fatawa*.

Looked at in its proper perspective these discourses of Balban and Bughra Khan reveal the actual problems of the sultanate—consolidation of dynastic interests, creation of loyal supporters, organization of the army, prosperity of the peasants and effective functioning of the sleuth system.

The actual position of the sultan *vis-à-vis* the people and the *shari'at* law is best illustrated in the functioning of the departments of finance, justice and *hisbah* (censorship of public morals).

Finances: The *shari'at* law has permitted the levy and realization of *kharaj, 'ushr, jiziyah, zakat* and *fay* only.[40] The main financial structure of the Delhi Sultanate was, by and large, based on it, but variations in

the nature of levy and the method of realization did take place. Besides, impelled by local situations and prevailing circumstances new taxes were also imposed. Barring Firuz Shah Tughluq, no sultan ever thought of discussing the legality of such additional impositions in the light of the *shari'at* regulations. Aibek is, however, reported to have issued orders for adhering to the religious law in the matter of the levy of taxes. He forbade the realization of *non-shari'i* taxes.[41] This obviously implies that some taxes of the pre-Muslim period were being realized by the new government which Aibek stopped.

It appears that in course of time a number of extra-*shari'at* taxes had become a regular source of income for the exchequer. Usage, necessity and exploitation—all combined to determine the levy of these taxes and *shari'at* rules were never invoked in this context. Firuz Shah Tughluq abolished these extra-*shari'i* taxes. Sometime during his reign, Sayyid Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari, popularly known as Makhdum-i-Jahanian, had also criticized the levy of non-*shari'i* taxes by the state.[42] According to 'Afif the '*ulama* and *mashaikh* of the period had suggested to Firuz Shah the abolition of these taxes.[43]

The taxes abolished by Firuz Shah were the following:[44]

1. *Mandwi Barg*: a tax in kind on corn sold in the state market
2. *Dalalat-i-Bazarha*: a tax on brokers
3. *Jazari*: a tax on butchers realized at the rate of twelve *jital* per slaughtered bull[45]
4. *Amiri Tarab*: amusement tax perhaps paid to the officers appointed to control festive gatherings
5. *Gul faroshi*: tax on the sale of flowers
6. *Zariba Tanbul*: tax on the sale of betel leaves
7. *Chungi Ghalla*: octroi on grain and cereals
8. *Kayyali*[46]: tax on weighing
9. *Nilgiri*: tax on the manufacture of indigo
10. *Mahi faroshi*: tax on the sale of fish
11. *Nadafi*: a tax on the carders of cotton
12. *Sabungiri*: a tax on soap making
13. *Risman faroshi*: a tax on selling ropes
14. *Roghangiri*: a tax on oil-making
15. *Nakhud biryan*: a tax on parched grain
16. *Teh Bazari*: a tax on stall-keepers on public land
17. *Chatta*[47]: a tax on projections
18. *Qimar khana*: a tax on gambling places
19. *Dad begi*: court fees

20. *Kotwali*: police dues
21. *Ihtisabi*: perquisites of the *muhtasib*
22. *Qassabi*: tax on butchers
23. *Kuza wa khisht puzi*: tax on kilns and baking bricks by bringing mud from old fortresses in Delhi
24. *Karhi*: tax on houses in villages
25. *Chara'i*: tax on grazing
26. *Masadarat*: fines
27. *Khizrvat*: a tax on vegetables
28. *Dangana*[48]: a tax on the distribution of *zakat*
29. *Mustaghil*: tax on houses and shops of Delhi

According to a later writer, Sujan Rai Bhandari, the list of taxes remitted included some other taxes also on festivities, sale and purchase of land, taking of the ashes of the cremated Hindus to the Ganges.[49] If this list of remitted taxes is compared with the sources of income given in Kautilya's *Arthasastra*[50], it would be helpful in tracing the antecedents of these taxes.

By abolishing these taxes, the government of Firuz Shah suffered a loss of about three million *tankas*.[51] Apart from the legal aspect of the remission of these taxes, mitigation of public worries was also a consideration. This aspect is evident from the brief review of these taxes by 'Afif.[52]

There were rules laid down for the distribution of the war booty.[53] These were rarely followed. The king could, according to Fakhr-i-Mudabbir, take any particular thing he liked from the booty, technically called *safiyah*,[54] and then distribute the rest on the following basis: 4/5 to the soldiers, 1/5 to the king. However, in actual practice it was seldom that this rule was followed. Only a few cases of distribution of *khams* on the basis of *shari'at* law are recorded. Malik Tabisi brought booty from his Kalinjar campaign. It was distributed on the *shari'i* basis.[55] But in 1259 when Ulugh Khan brought thirty thousand *tankas* from Mewat campaign, the entire amount was sent to the treasury.[56]

Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji once asked Qazi Mughis about the fate of the booty brought by his army from Deogir. The Qazi replied that it belonged to the public exchequer. The sultan got irritated when the Qazi told him that the expenditure incurred on his *haram* from the public exchequer was all unauthorized and illegal. The Qazi explained the position of *shari'at* law at the risk of losing his head.[57] Firuz Shah Tughluq issued instructions for the distribution of booty on the basis of *shari'at* rules.[58] Mahru refers to instructions given to government

officers to adhere to the *shari'i* rules regarding the distribution of war booty.[59] It is reported about Bahlul Lodi that he took only his legal share from the booty.[60]

Distinction between the privy purse and the public exchequer was not very often referred to, but nevertheless existed. Firuz Shah once asked the jurists:

> "If a man, with personal and financial endeavour, digs irrigation channels from deep rivers and those canals flow into areas (of land), townships and villages, and the dwellers in these places get great profit out of it; is that man, entitled to *haqq-i-sharb*, that is ten per cent."[61]

The jurists discussed and decided that such a person was entitled to *haqq-i-sharb*. Thereupon Firuz Shah brought the amount that accrued as *haqq-i-sharb* entirely into his *amlak*. It was not credited to *bait-ul-mal*.

Acting on the same principle Firuz populated many villages in 'dead lands' and enlisted them as his personal property (*amlak*). He, however, earmarked the income from such areas for helping the learned and the pious.

The *amlak* of the sultans became so large that a separate staff and a separate treasury had to be maintained to look after it.

Notwithstanding all the theoretical and formal distinctions made between the *bait-ul-mal* and the privy purse, the treasury was, for all practical purposes, the property of the sultan and he could use it as he wished. The only sultan of Delhi who lived on his personal earnings, through copying the *Qur'an*,[62] was Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. The story of his wife cooking the food for him, though not confirmed by contemporary sources, is in keeping with the general pattern of his life. It is said that when his wife asked him to employ a servant from the public treasury to cook the food, he replied, "The *bait-ul-mal* belongs to the people. It is not my property".[63]

Justice: There is hardly any political treatise of the period which does not expatiate on the duty of a king to administer even-handed justice. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir quotes a saying of the Prophet that on the Day of Judgement the just ruler (*imam-i 'adil*) would be under his banner.[64]

Cases involving dispensation of justice were either between individuals or between the state and the individual. While dealing with the cases of the former category, the sultans tried their utmost to be just and fair to all. Iltutmish looked upon dispensation of justice as the most important duty of a sultan. Following an old Persian custom, he had ordered that an oppressed person should wear a dyed garment. Whenever the sultan's eyes fell on him, he immediately attended to his problem.

Ibn Battuta further informs us: "But he was not content with this. He said to himself, 'Some persons might be oppressed in the course of the night and the oppressed might desire immediate redress of their grievances. So he set up two statues of lions on two towers at the gate of his palace, and around their necks were two iron chains with a huge bell. The oppressed person would shake the bell in the night and the sultan hearing the sound would instantly look into his case and administer justice."[65]

Balban used to say that though he could not live up to the ideal of *din panahi* (protection of faith), he could nevertheless strive to protect the oppressed from the oppressor.[66] He warned his sons and the nobles close to him that if they oppressed anybody he would unhesitatingly punish them. "Your nearness to me and the claims of your services will not hinder me in the enforcement of justice", he used to say. During campaigns, he would stay on a river-bank for ten or twelve days to ensure that the old, the sick, women and children had crossed the bridge first.[67] Barani says that he was like a father and mother to the helpless and the oppressed.[68] He did not hesitate to get an *iqta'dar* flogged for having unjustly punished a person.[69]

It was very rare that the sultans did not dispense even-handed justice in cases between individuals.[70] However, in matters involving the state, their attitude was different. Prestige of the sultans, honour of the government and expediency determined their decisions in such cases. Moral and religious feelings never allowed the people to forgive a sultan who ignored the supplications of the poor. Balban did not heed the appeals of a widowed mother against the execution of her son. People attributed the death of Prince Muhammad at the hands of the Mongols to divine retribution for this.[71] Sayyidi Maula's execution by Jalal-u'd-din Khalji was considered so inauspicious that people attributed it to Divine fury. "On the day of his death", writes Barani, "a storm with black dust arose and the whole world became dark. . . . Soon after the killing of Sayyidi Maula there was scarcity of rainfall . . . there was famine in Delhi ... prices of grain rose to one *jital* a seer. . . . Driven by the pangs of hunger people drowned themselves in the Jumna."[72] 'Isami says: "There is no doubt that every land in which such innocent blood is shed, is deprived of all rain; not a leaf of grass grows upon it."[73] Barani thus sums up his assessment of the situation: "After the killing of Sayyidi Maula, the government of Jalal-u'd-din fell into disorder, for venerable men have said that killing a *durwesh* is an ill-omen and does not do good to any king."[74]

Balban and Muhammad bin Tughluq, though noted for their sense of equity, were not guided by these principles while dealing with crimes against the government. Barani thus indicts Balban:

> "In spite of his kindness and compassion, equity and justice, plenty of prayers and fasting, he behaved like a despotic tyrant in punishing rebels and disturbers of peace. He knew no restraint in the punishment of rebels; to punish a rebellion he would destroy a whole city or army. In punishing political rebels, he did not waver by a needle-point from the traditions of tyrants. At the time of exercising his terroristic royal power he was utterly Godless. In killing and tying up disobedient rebels he cast aside both morality and religion; he followed whatever policy he considered best for his temporary kingdom, whether permitted by *shari'at* or not."[75]

Muhammad bin Tughluq's sense of justice was remarkable. It is said that he appeared at the court of *qazi* when a Hindu filed a suit against him for killing his brother. It is said that the Sultan appeared in the court of law like an ordinary individual, accepted the verdict of the *qazi* and conciliated the plaintiff by paying money.[76]

This is a solitary case of its nature in the whole range of medieval Indian history. It is also reported about Muhammad bin Tughluq that he had a permanent bench of jurists in his court and before executing anybody he invariably obtained their concurrence.[77] A team of four *muftis* was present throughout in his *kaushak*.[78] He argued incessantly with the jurists till they endorsed his views. It would be naive to think that through these methods crimes against the state could be patiently heard or justly decided. The way Muhammad bin Tughluq treated those who committed crimes against the state or disagreed with his policies,[79] and the tortures that he inflicted to extort confessions[80] were terrible and can hardly be justified according to religious law. It was in view of this heinous aspect of the sultan's tortures and punishments that Firuz Shah Tughluq compensated with huge sums of money and got letters of forgiveness written by the descendants of those punished in such cruel ways, and placed these letters by the side of the sultan's grave.[81] Firuz Shah has further informed us that he issued orders for giving up such punishments as "cutting of hands and feet, ears and noses; tearing out of the eyes; pouring of molten lead into the throats of persons; crushing of the bones of hands and feet with mallets; burning of the members of the body; driving of nails into hands, feet and breasts; flaying, whipping with spiked thongs hamstringing; sawing of men into two parts and various other methods of mutilation."[82]

Hisbah: The office of the *muhtasib* (in charge of *hisbah*) existed throughout the Sultanate period, but its effective exercise of authority dependend almost entirely on the type of life led at the court. Rulers like Kaiqubad, Jalal-u'd-din Khalji and Mubarak Khalji, who were themselves sunk in wine and venery could not be expected to enforce *ihtisab* rules. Their interest in censorship of morals would have been tantamount to teaching honesty with a stolen goose in the armpit, a situation which they avoided. Iltutmish, Balban, 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji and the Tughluq sultans, particularly Muhammad bin Tughluq led chaste and impeccable lives, and the atmosphere of their courts was characterized by decency and decorum. They infused life and vigour in *hisbah* administration. Iltutmish did not ignore even small matters which came within the purview of *ihtisab*. He obtained the opinion of '*ulama* about the legality of *sama*' (mystic music), and did not hesitate to investigate a charge of adultery which turned out to be utterly false and mischievous against a saint of Shaikh Jalal-u'd-din Tabrizi's eminence.[83]

Balban was so deeply conscious of his kingly responsibility that no unseemly activity at the court was possible.[84] Naturally, the atmosphere in the capital town and the neighbouring cities also became sober and free from moral vices.[85] Kaiqubad and Jalal-u'd-din Khalji threw themselves headlong into convivialism and city life was infected by it.[86] According to Barani the entire city resounded with musicians and beauties appeared on every balcony.[87] The institution of *hisbah* seems to have gone into stupor during their regimes.

'Ala-u'd-din Khalji revived the institution of *ihtisab* and made it efficient and effective.[88] He coordinated its activities with his intelligence department.[89] His *muhtasibs* checked sex crimes, public wine, *bhang (Canabis sativa)*,[90] gambling, hoarding and regrating of corn (*ihtakar*).[91] He forced all the prostitutes to enter into legal wedlock. Thus, says Amir Khusrau, "all the roots of sin and crime were cut off".[92] Pickpockets, cutpurses and others who indulged in such crimes and activities were cut out root and branch. Draconian punishments were inflicted on the *Ibahatis* (fraternity of incest).[93] Magicians were punished. Weighing less became a crime and sometimes capital punishment was inflicted for it.[94] Dry wells were dug as prisons for addicts of wine[95] and horrible punishments were inflicted on offenders of all types. While explaining his motives in inflicting such punishments on people, 'Ala-u'd-din once remarked:

> "...if a man violates the wife of another, it does no harm to my kingdom. If a man drinks, I suffer no injury from it...I do what the Prophet has commanded."[96]

This throws light on the spirit of his *ihtisab* activity.

Some of the *ihtisab* measures of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji had financial implications. The sultan, however, decided to forego all income through such sources and wrote off enormous taxes.[97] Besides, Amir Khusrau informs us that the sultan "reduced the tax on shop-keepers, who had been selling their wares dear."[98]

The *muhtasibs* (censors of public morals) and the *munihis*[99] (intelligence officers) worked in close cooperation. The intelligence officers gathered information about what went on in the private residences also, but *ihtisab* rules could not be applied on activities there. However, it served the political interests of the state to have an eye on private life.[100] The *munihis* were ordered not to molest persons who distilled or drank wine privately.[101]

'Ala-u'd-din Khalji created an ideal social atmosphere in his empire.[102] Even Shaikh Nasir-'ud-din Chiragh of Delhi praised the peace and prosperity of his reign.[103] It was during the time of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji that Maulana Zia-u'd-din Sunnami wrote his *Nisab-ul-Ihtisab* (curriculum for censorship) which became a manual of guidance for people engaged in *ihtisab* work.[104] This is perhaps the only work written during the Sultanate period to guide the work of *muhtasibs*. Though enormous literature on *fiqh* had appeared during the reign of Firuz Shah Tughluq,[105] no such manual of instructions about *ihtisab* was compiled.

The institution of *ihtisab* became almost defunct during the time of Mubarak Khalji.

Under the Tughluqs the department of *hisbah* received special attention. Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq was not only free from all those moral vices which had tarnished the character of his predecessor, but he never allowed any one suspected of loose morals to come anywhere near him.[106] Muhammad bin Tughluq stengthened the *hisbah* department furhter and extended its operational activity. He enforced laws of prohibition,[107] and punished people for not offering prayers in congregation.[108] Shihab-u'd-din al-'Umari writes about him: "He (the sultan) is one who does not permit the prohibited actions nor lets anyone (have) of forbidden things...he forbids the use of wine and enforces legal punishment for it and goes to the extreme of punishment for those of his courtiers who are addicted to it."[109]

Firuz Shah used to drink wine[110], but maintained an austere

atmosphere at the court. He punished the *ibahatis* by throwing them into prison or executing them.[111] Some mystics of the period, whose pantheistic remarks were against the *shari'at* rules, were punished.[112] He forbade Muslim women from visiting tombs,[113] and Hindu women from visiting temples,[114] because such visits led to promiscuous mixing of men and women. Firuz Shah's orders against some Hindu festivals and centres of religious activities were not dictated by religious fanaticism, but by the spirit of *ihtisab* (censorship of public morals).

In the Persian tradition, the *Shah Namah* of Firdausi and in Turkish literature *Kutadgu Bilig* of Yusuf Khass Hajib reflect the position that royalty occupied in Muslim political consciousness. Zia-u'd-din Barani analyzed in his *Fatawa-i-Jahandari* the tensions and contradictions which existed between the existing state laws and the laws of *shari'at*. Keeping the legal and the actual position of the royalty of medieval India in view, one is constrained to conclude that political expediency (*masalah-i-mulk*)[115] rather than dictates of religion guided the actions of the sultans.

References

1. At least once in the historical literature of medieval India, the word has been used in this sense. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah,* p. 1.
2. See T.W. Arnold, *The Caliphate,* Appendix D, title 'Sultan', pp. 202-3.
3. *Tabaqat al-Shafi'iya al-Kubra*, Egypt, vol. IV, p. 13.
4. *Adab-ul-Harb was-Shuja'at,* p. 17. Besides large number of other appellations used by Fakhr-i-Mudabbir for Iltutmish, two epithets particularly refer to his relationship with the *khilafat*: *shihab-i sama'al-khilafa* (a bright star on the firmament of *khilafat*) and *'azd al-khilafa* (an assistant of the *khilafat*).
5. R.P. Tripathi, *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration*, p. 37.
6. Nelson Wright, pp. 120, 143; Thomas, pp. 211-16, 249-50.
7. N. Wright, pp. 149-52; Thomas, pp. 259-60.
8. *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, 139 f.
9. *Rehla*, text, vol II, p. 44.
10. *Tarikh-i-Alfi,* MS.
11. *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, MS, 140 f.
12. *Rehla*, text, vol. II, pp. 47-48.
13. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 491-96.
14. *Qasa'id-i Badr Chach,* 14, 19-20.
15. *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, MS, 139-41 ff.
16. *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, p.18.
17. 'Afif, p. 275.
18. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 274.
19. *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, MS, 140 f.
20. Ibid., MS, 41 f.

21. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 265-67.
22. He was a *khalifah* of Shaikh Shihab-u'd-din Suhrawardi. *Ahkbar-ul-Akhyar*, p. 28.
23. Barani, p. 41.
24. See *Fatawa-i-Jahandari.*
25. Ibid., *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 69-80.
26. Ibid., p. 73.
27. Ibid., p. 77.
28. Ibid., p. 79. The reason for this economy in expenditure was explained by Bughra Khan to his son on the basis of *Adab-us-Salatin*: "he should have so much money in his treasury that just as he comes to the help of his army (in war) he can also come to the help of his *rai'yyat* in case of a famine", p. 137.
29. Ibid., p. 80.
30. Ibid., pp. 93-106.
31. That a ruler like Balban had to warn his son against excessive indulgence in drinking shows that though he had himself given up drinking on ascending the throne, he could not stop his son from indulging in it.
32. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 147.
33. Ibid., pp. 148-49.
34. Ibid., pp. 148 et seq.
35. Ibid., p. 151.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid., pp. 153-54. For the nature and fuctioning of these *diwans*, see I.H. Qureshi, *The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi*, pp. 82-83 ff., 120, 129, 130-32, 160-64.
38. Ibid., p. 154.
39. Ibid., pp. 154-55.
40. For the nature of these taxes, see N.P. Aghnides, *Mohammadan Theories of Finance*, New York, 1916; F. Lokkegard, *Islamic Taxation in the Classic Period*, Copenhagan, 1950.
    For realization of these taxes by the sultans, I.H. Qureshi, *The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi*, chapter VI.
41. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah*, pp. 33-34; *Abah-ul-Harb*, f. 14a.
42. *Siraj-ul-Hidayah*, pp. 111-12.
43. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 374-77.
44. Firuz Shah Tughluq gives the list in *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi* (pp. 5-6). With slight variations and orthographical differences the taxes have been mentioned in 'Afif (*Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 374-77) and *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* (61 f.)
45. 'Afif, p. 375.
46. Some writers have interpreted it as *Kitabi* (tax on scribes), other as *Kababi* (tax on preparing *kabab*) but *Sirat* has clearly *Kayyali*.
47. Differently read as *chappa* (printed cloths), *habba* (peny).
48. See 'Afif, p. 375.
49. *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh*, p. 249; see also *Zubdat-ut-Tawarikh*, MS, 46 f.
50. Translated into English by R. Shamasastry, Mysore, 1923, pp. 63-65.
51. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 379.
52. Ibid., pp. 347-77.
53. *Adab-ul-Harb*, pp. 398 et seq.
54. Ibid., 155b.
55. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, p. 240.
56. Ibid., pp. 315-16.
57. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 293.

58. *Futuhat*, p. 6.
59. *Insha-i-Mahru*, Aligarh, p. 29.
60. Ferishta, vol. I, p. 179.
61. 'Afif, pp. 129-30.
62. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 26; *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 56. See also, Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 142-44.
63. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, vol. I, p. 90; *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, vol. I, p. 77; Ferishta, vol. I, p. 74.
64. *Adab-ul-Harb*, p. 15. Chapter II of the book (pp. 64-91) explains in very effective manner, with apt illustrations from history, the responsibility of a ruler to create conditions in which no human being is oppressed.
65. *Rehla*, tr., p. 33.
    When Fakhr-i-Mudabbir referred in general terms to this method of administering justice and attending to the problems of the people, he perhaps had Iltutmish in mind, *Adab-ul-Harb*, p. 80.
66. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 44.
67. Ibid., p. 45.
68. Ibid., p. 40.
69. Ibid.
70. For Firuz Shah punishing a favourite, 'Afif, pp. 503-08.
71. See details *infra*.
72. Barani, p. 202. This is confirmed by 'Isami (*Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 218) who says: "notable men, in batches of fifty, used to drown themselves hand in hand in the river Jumna."
73. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 217.
74. Barani, p. 212.
    'Isami also gives details of the execution (*Futuh-us-Salatin*, pp. 215-20).
75. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 47.
76. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 130.
77. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 115; *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, vol. I, p. 239.
78. Yahya Sirhindi, p. 115. The sultan once enquired from Barani (*Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 511) about *shari'at* law about execution of persons.
79. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, pp. 115-16; *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, pp. 137-39, 146-47, 148 et seq.
80. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, pp. 136-48.
81. *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 19-20.
82. Ibid., p. 2; Eng., tr., p. 106.
83. *Futuh-us-Salatin* pp. 117-19; *Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad*, p. 239.
84. Jamali, *Siyar-ul-'Arifin*, p. 168. See also Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 121-23.
85. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 46, 128.
86. *Ma'asir-i-Rahimi*, vol. I, p. 305; Barani, p. 129.
87. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 167.
88. Ibid., pp. 129, 157, 165-66, 384, 395-96. Amir Khusrau, *Nuh Sipihr*, pp. 38, 39.
89. Barani, pp. 342-43.
90. Ibid., p. 305.
91. Amir Khusrau, *Khaza'in-ul-Futuh*, Eng. tr., pp. 10-11.
92. Barani, pp. 305, 307, 343, 346; *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 66. "*Ghalla-i-Muhtakir ghalla-i-sultani shuday*", says Barani. There are many references in medieval mystic literature to the misery suffered by people on account of *ihtakar*. See *Saroor-us-Sudur*, MS, f. 29b; *Siraj-ul-Hidayah*, MS, f. 25b.

93. *Khaza'in-ul-Futuh*, Eng. tr., p. 11.
94. Ibid., Eng. tr., p. 12.
95. Ibid., pp. 9-10.
96. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 297.
97. Ibid., p. 296.
98. Ibid., p. 284.
99. *Khaza'in-ul-Futuh*, Eng. tr., p. 9.
100. *Munhi* means one who announces news; *munahhi* means a person who forbids or warns. Barani uses the word in the sense of intelligence personnel.
101. Intelligence departments of Balban, 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji and Muhammad bin Tughluq were thoroughly organized. Balban knew what was going in distant parts of the sultanate. 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji had such information about the private lives of the people that the general public thought that he had miraculous powers (Barani, p. 324). Muhammad bin Tughluq knew about the relations of Maliks with their wives. (*'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 171.)
102. Barani, p. 341.
103. *Khair-ul-Majalis*, p. 241; see also *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 66.
104. The fact that its manuscripts are found in Arab countries shows that it was popular in Islamic countries also. It was translated into Persian as *Dastur al-Ihtisab*. Translated into Urdu also and published from Lucknow in 1310 AH.
105. Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 396-98.
106. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 443-44.
107. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, Eng. tr., 64; *Masalik-ul-Absar*, Eng. tr., p. 38.
108. *Rehla*, Ar. text, p. 52; *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, pp. 130-31.
109. *Masalik-ul-Absar*, Eng. tr., p. 38.
110. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 79.
111. *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 17; *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, MS.
112. *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 412-14.
113. *Futuhat-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 8-9.
114. Sujan Rai, *Khulasat al-Tawarikh*, p. 250; Nur-ul-Haqq, *Zubdat al-Tawarikh*, MS, f. 47.
115. Nizam-u'd-din Bakhshi remarks about Balban: "*Masalah-i-mulk bar hama muqaddam dashtay* (He kept the expediency of government (country) paramount consideration (in deciding all matters)". *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, I, p. 82.

CHAPTER 4

The Palace: Imperial Household and Karkhanahs

The palace was the focal point in the life of royalty. The tradition of constructing palaces in the history of Islam goes back to the Omayyads who built *Qasr al-Khuld* and *Qasr al-Khazra* to overawe the public mind by their glory and grandeur. The sultans of Delhi were zealous builders of palaces. Since occupation of the palace of a deceased monarch was considered inauspicious, the first concern of every new ruler was to construct a magnificent new palace for himself. As was quite natural under the circumstances, individual tastes and ideals of a monarch found full expression in the construction and decoration of these palaces. The palace of Sultan Mas'ud of Ghazna contained nude mural paintings.[1] The palace of Firuz Shah Tughluq, on the other hand, did not contain even figures of animals or birds.[2]

Medieval records refer to many palaces of the sultans, *Qasr-i-Sapaid*,[3] *Kaushak-i-Sabz*,[4] *Kaushak-i-Lal*,[5] *Kaushak-i-Siyah*,[6] *Hazar Sutun*,[7] *Farhatabad*,[8] etc. but no detailed information about their planning or inner decoration is available in contemporary works. Some stray references to their peculiarities are, however, found in some works. Ibn Battuta informs us about the palace of Sultan Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq that its bricks were plated with gold and "at sunshine they shone with such brightness and lustre that one could not gaze at it."[9] In this palace, a tank was also constructed which was filled with molten gold.[10] The *Qasr-i-Humayun* of Kaiqubad was very artistically decorated. It was made of red stone and red silk cloth (*atlas*) was used for its curtains.[11] The *Qasr-i-Nau* of Kaiqubad had eight gates and a number of lofty pillars and pinnacles. Its roof looked like mirror.[12]

Ibn Battuta gives a vivid description of the palace of Muhammad bin Tughluq which is perhaps the most graphic account of a medieval palace that we have today. He says: "The Sultan's palace at Delhi is called *dar-i-sara* and has a large number of gates. At the first gate a troop of men are posted, and there sit the blowers of clarions, trumpets and horns. When an *amir* or a great man comes, the clarions are sounded announcing 'so-and-so has come'; 'so-and-so has come'; and the same

procedure is followed at the second and third gates. Outside the first gate are platforms on which sit the executioners, whose business is to execute human beings. As a rule, when the royal order is issued for the execution of any person he is executed at the gate of the palace where his corpse remains for three days. And between the first and second gates there is a big vestibule on either side of which are built platforms on which sit the trumpeters from amongst the gate-keepers.... At the second gate sit the gatekeepers who are appointed for the purpose. And between the second and third gates is a big platform on which sits the chief palace officer (*naqib-un-nuqaba*) who holds in his hand a gold club and wears a gold cap studded with jewels and surmounted with peacock feathers. And the palace officers stand before him, each wearing a gold cap, girding his loin with a sash and holding in his hand a whip with a gold or silver handle. And this second gate leads to a big and extensive hall wherein sit the people. As for the third gate, round about it are platforms on which the gate secretaries (*kuttab-ul-bab*) sit. One of their duties is not to let any person enter, unless by royal appointment; and for every man entering it the number of his companions and attendants in his escort is fixed. Whenever anybody comes to this gate, the gate secretaries write down that so-and-so came in the first hour or the second hour of the day or at any later hour till the close of the day; and these records the sultan persues after the retiring prayer of '*Isha*'. They also note all that happens at the gate; and some of he *maliks*' sons are appointed to present these reports to the sultan. It is also one of their customs that if any official absents himself for three consecutive days, or more, from the royal palace with or without excuse, he is not allowed to re-enter without the sultan's permission. If his absence be due to any illness or similar cause, he brings along with him, on his coming back, a fit present for the sultan. The same is the practice with those who arrive after long journeys. The jurist (*faqih*) presents a copy of the *Qur'an* or a book or something like it, and the *fakir* presents a prayer-mat or a rosary or a toothbrush or the like. The *amirs* and those enjoying equal dignity present horses, camels and arms. And this third gate leads to a vast and spacious council-hall (*mashwar*) called *hazar sutun* that is, one thousand pillars. The pillars are of polished wood; and on these rests a wooden roof, covered with strikingly beautiful paintings and mosaic. Under this roof sit the people and in this council hall the sultan sits for public audience (*julus-ul-'am*)".[13]

Medieval chroniclers refer frequently to the glory and grandeur of the courts of the Delhi sultans.[14] Even ambassadors from foreign courts

were dazed by their grandeur. The Mongol emissaries fainted even at the court of Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud[15] who was not at all interested in organizing his court in any elegant way.

The Royal Household

A large number of men of various ranks were kept in royal attendance both for service and ceremonial purposes. The chief dignitary of the household was the *wakil-i-dar*.[16] He was the controller of the entire household and since all those who formed part of the imperial household depended on him, he exercised great influence. The payment of emoluments and salaries to the palace-staff was arranged by him and all royal orders relating to the household were communicated through him.

Another important dignitary of the household, who was almost equal in rank to the *wakil-i-dar*, was the *amir hajib*.[17] He was the master of ceremonies at the court, and escorted the nobles and high officials before the king. All petitions were presented to the sultan through the *amir hajib* or his assistants.[18] On account of the great prestige and influence of this post, an *amir hajib* was usually a person belonging to the royal family or one of the most trusted nobles.[19] One of the important duties of the *amir hajib* was to make arrangements for various celebrations.[20] The sultan had a few *hajibs* always in his attendance. One or two of these were with him even when he was in private audience with the nobles. Probably these selected nobles were given the title of *Khass Hajibs*. When the sultan took the field in person, these *hajibs* acted as his *aides-de-camp*.[21]

The *naqibs* or ushers proclaimed orders to the soldiers and the public. They ran in front of the royal procession announcing the presence of the sultan. The chief of the *naqibs* was known as *naqib-ul-nuqaba*. He carried a gold mace and wore a gold tiara surmounted with peacock feathers. His seat was in front of the door leading to the hall of audience and he checked every visitor.

The sultan had a number of body-guards known as *jandars*. Their officer was called *sar jandar*. Sometimes there were two *sar jandars*—one for the right, the other for the left. Young men with attractive features and good physiques were appointed as *jandars*. Balban employed Seistani soldiers as *jandars* and paid 60 to 70 thousand *jitals* a year to them. Those who carried the armour were called *silahdars*. They looked after the royal arms and accompanied the sultan when he rode out.

There were two chief *silahdars*, known as *sar silahdar*, one looked after the left and the other after the right wing.

Minor Officers of the Royal Household

Minor officers of the household included the following:
Kitabdar: Librarian.
Mushafdar:[22] Keeper of the royal copy of the *Qur'an*.
Khasadar:[23]Superintendent of the royal kitchen.
Chashnigir:[24] Officer who tasted the king's food before serving it.
Sarabdar:[25] In charge of the supply of water to the royal household.
Saqi-i-khass:[26] Chief cup bearer who served water to the sultan.
Farrash:[27] Spreader of carpets; footman, office-boy.
Tashtdar:[28] Ewer holder.
Mash'aldar:[29] Torch-bearer; link-boy, a scullion.
Dawatdar and *Sar dawatdar*:[30] Keeper of inkpot; a secretary of state (Steingass); head off....
Dabir-i-Sara:[31] Secretary of the palace.
Bahladar:[32] One wearing hunting gloves in one's belt.
Sar Chatrdar:[33] Head of the holders of royal parasol.
Amir-i-Tuzuk:[34] Master of ceremonies.
Shahna-i-Bargha:[35] Night patrol of the palace.
Musalladar:[36] Keeper of the prayer mats.
Muhrdar: Keeper of the seals.
Shana-i-Pil:[37] Superintendent of the royal elephants.
Chaoosh:[38] A herald, a sergeant.
Kalid dar-i Kaushak:[39] Keeper of the key of the palace.
Abdar: A servant whose duty was to keep water cool.

The Karkhanahs

The imperial household required a big commissariat to look after its needs. Its departments were broadly divided into two categories: *ratibi* (dealing with perishable goods) and *ghair ratibi* (dealing with things other than covered by the *ratibi* departments). Under Firuz Shah Tughluq there were thirty-six *karkhanahs* (departments) which looked after the requirements of the palace.

The following were the *ratibi* departments:

Abdar khanah: Department looking after the supply of water to the palace.

Shama'dar khanah: Department looking after lights in the palace.

'Itradar khanah: Department keeping scents and odours.

Paigah: Department dealing with horses, their upkeep and breeding.
Pil khanah: Department looking after elephants.
Sutur: Department looking after oxen, mules, kennels, falcons, leopards, camel etc.

The *ghair ratibi* departments were the following:
Jamadar khanah: Department of wardrobe.
Tashtdar khanah: Department of ewer-bearers and baths.
'Alam khanah: Department in charge of royal standards.
Kitab khanah: Department managing the library.
Ghariyal khanah: Department regulating time and gongs.
Farrash khanah: Department in charge of furniture, tents, carpets etc.
Rikab khanah: Department dealing with saddlery, harness, etc.
Zarrad khanah: Department keeping armour and war material.
Silah khanah: Department of arms, weaponry etc.[40]

Each *karkhanah* was under the control of a *malik* or a *khan*. A *mutasarrif* attached to every *karkhanah* maintained the accounts. He was supervised by a chief *mutasarrif* of all the *karkhanahs*. Details of articles required were first sent to him. Firuz Shah had a separate *diwan* (accounts office) for the *karkhanahs*. The *mutasarrifs* had, however, to deal with the *Diwan-i-Wizarat* also which was the central accounts office. The *Diwan-i-Wizarat* checked the accounts of the *karkhanahs* at the end of the year. The *karkhanahs* made their purchases in the open market.

The *karkhanahs* in the royal household were, in fact, factories to manufacture articles needed at the court. During the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq elaborate arrangements were made for the manufacture of cloth. The sultan distributed twenty thousand dresses annually. The manufacture of arms, engines of war, armour and other fighting equipment also received great care and attention.[41]

The *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* gives the following list of articles which were available at all times in the *karkhanahs*:

1. *Minerals etc.*: Raw material taken from the mines, ore, gold and silver; plates, bricks, bars; lead, bronze, brass, copper, facile brass, lead, quicksilver, tin, mercury, arsenic, coal tar.

2. *Gems, shells etc.*: Small beads, black beads, glass beads, shells, cyrstal, pearls and gems, cornelian, agate, ruby, emerald, turquoise, chrysolite, amber, coral, etc.

3. *Ornaments*: Necklaces of pearls, necklaces of beads, bracelets, armlet, ribbon, rosary, beads for the rosary, hats, caps, ear-rings, crown caps, rings, ankle-rings, metal rings, etc.

4. *Nets and fishing nets*: Fishing net, bird's net, ropes for catching the

deer, beast net, spindle work, threads for fowls' net, drum, etc.

5. *Metals and Tools*: Drum, steel, steel especially prepared in Damascus; dross of the iron, iron bars, iron bit, anvil, hammer, bar of the door, a tool for spreading the iron, roller scissors for cutting gold or silver; knife, file, silken fringe of a belt; anvil, a corslet of iron, ballows of the blacksmith, ballows of the glodsmith.

6. *Miscellaneous articles for arms and weapons*: Pieces of black silk; thread used in the cross bow; arrow's edge; cross bow; musket ball; cannon balistas; missiles.

7. *Arms and sporting things and tools*: Points of sword; points of spear or arrow; sting of a whip; hatchet; pestle of a mortar; saw; wooden planks; weaver's combs; weaver's spindle; water-shower; instrument for sprinkling the woof, sewing thread; woof; ropes; raw silk; ropes of a boat for sails; a thick rope made of coconut fibre; anchor; raw hides; leather; skin-hides; compass; skin; water bags (of skin); jar; goblet; basin; bottle for wine; wooden cup; weaver's brush etc.[42]

This, in fact, is a list of some of the articles which were available in the royal stores for supply to workers, artisans, craftsmen, weavers, goldsmiths etc. working for palace requirements. No less than five hundred workers in gold brocade and four thousand weavers of silk worked in the *karkhanahs* of Muhammad bin Tughluq to manufacture cloth required by the household and for making the robes of honour.

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CHAPTER 5

Royal Insignia and Dress

To emphasize the dignified parts of kingship, some articles and practices were considered exclusive privileges of the sultans. Medieval records refer particularly to the following symbols of royalty:

1. *Khutba*: oration delivered every Friday before prayers
2. *Takht*: royal throne
3. *Sandali*: a bench whereon shoes are left
4. *Muhr bar'aqiq*: agate seal
5. *Tughra dar tauqi-wa-tabligh*: royal titles prefixed on public deeds and letters
6. *Magas ran*: a fan, a flyflap
7. *Bang pas*: a guard to keep guard on noise and clamour
8. *Dur'ah*: a little cuirass; a leather armour for the body, reaching down to the waist
9. *Ghashia barah*: a leather covering for a saddle or for the belt of a sword; the pericardium. A piece of iron in the hinder part of a camel's saddle
10. *Salah har waqt*: a fit, proper opportunity all the time; a favourable time
11. *Zangir pesh dakhul*: a bell fixed on the top of tower
12. *Bahir dar pesh mahal*: baggage, camp-followers before palace
13. *Naubat dar sawari-i muhimha*: grand tent of audience during campaigns
14. *Kulah-i-mulk*: head-gear of a king
15. *Chatr siyah*: black *chatr*
16. *Tarkash safaid*: white *tarkash*
17. *Kitabat-i-tarikh*: compilation of chronicles
18. *Bar bar pelan*: use of elephants for carrying royal luggage
19. *Visits of muluks, dar sara awwal waqt*: visits of rulers to the palace early in the morning
20. *Bang-o-jaras ba waqt-i-baramad*: bands and proclamations on coming out
21. *Durra-ba bad kosh*: flogging the evil doer

According to 'Afif, Firuz Shah Tughluq added to this list two other items:

1. *Talas gharyala* and
2. *Nisar-i-chatr*,[1] scatterings over *chatr* to ward off evil

Throne

According to Ibn Khaldun, Amir Mu'awiya was the first Muslim ruler to use a throne. His excuse for this innovation was that due to senility he could not keep standing for long.[2] Thereafter it became a practice of the Muslim rulers to use a throne. In course of time it came to be regarded as one of the most important insignia of royalty,[3] and thrones of different types, sizes and heights were made. The Abbasid throne was seven feet high.[4] The throne of the sultans was usually square in shape, and was made of wood but was plated with gold and studded with gems. Ibn Battuta remarks about the throne of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq: "...in the forepart of the council-hall is placed the high throne, the whole of which is of pure gold and the legs are studded with jewels. It is twenty-three spans long and half of that measurement wide; and it consists of separate pieces, which are fitted together when desired. Several men jointly lift a piece on account of the heaviness of the gold; and over the throne they place a cushion; and over the sultan's head a parasol studded with jewels is raised."[5]

Crown

The first Muslim ruler to use the crown was 'Abd-ul-'Aziz bin Musa bin Nusair, the first *wali* of Spain. It was under the influence of Roderic's widow, whom he had married, that he began to use the crown privately in the beginning, but later on, when it became known to the people they expressed their resentment at this innovation. Slowly and gradually, the crown became popular among the Muslim rulers. The crown of the Fatimids of Egypt, called Taj Sharif, was studded with precious stones and jewels.[6] The crowns of the sultans of Delhi were round in shape, protruding out at the forehead. Amir Khusrau has described the crown of Kaiqubad.[7]

Chatr

The *chatr* (royal parasol) was another very important emblem of royal authority. Generally in Muslim countries, the *chatr* was dome-like in shape. The Fatimid *chatr* was made of the same colour of which the royal dress was made. The person who held the *chatr* was usually

one of the highest dignitaries of the realm.[8] The Ayyubids used saffron-silk for their *chatr* and embroidered it lavishly with gold. They placed a silver bird on the top of this *chatr*.[9] Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah says that the *chatr* of the Ghaznavids had an eagle over it. Mas'udi tells us that the Christian kings of Spain were very fond of eagles. Wherever they went eagles flew over their heads.[10] Probably the Muslims were influenced by this Spanish tradition.

During the Sultanate period the colour and design of the *chatr* differed from ruler to ruler. It was, in fact, a matter of personal taste and individual preference. Usually fine and costly cloth was used for *chatr*,[11] with long sticks to hold it. Khusrau says that the sticks of the *chatr* of Kaiqubad seemed to touch the sky.[12] These *chatrs* were lavishly studded with gems and pearls.[13] It appears that the figure of *huma* (phoenix) was usually worked on the *chatr* in gold. Balban had expressed his desire to put a golden fish instead of *huma* over his *chatr*.[14] Khusrau says about the *chatr* of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji: "His *chatr-i-humai* is a protector of Islam."[15] On another occasion he says that "*huma* has made its nest in his *chatr*".[16] In fact, *huma*, was considered an auspicious bird and was closely associated with royal power in mythology. It is reported by al-Qalqashandi that the red banners of Muhammad bin Tughluq had figures of two snakes worked on them in gold.[17] It may be pointed out that the serpent is closely associated with Brahmanical Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism.[18] The snake is generally believed to be the protector of kings. "The basis of this belief, according to one suggestion, is that, as representing the ancient rulers, they naturally protect their successors. The Nagasias of the Central Provinces derive their name from the *nag*, or cobra, and assert that a cobra spread its hood to protect the tribal hero from the sun. The claim to the throne of Sanga, the hero of Mewar and Kehar of Jaisalmer, was recognized in the same way. The same tale is told of great chief Holkar, and of the infant Buddha, whose image at Sarnath represents him sheltered by the coils and hood of a three-headed snake."[19]

Most of the sultans liked black and white colours for their *chatrs*. When Iltutmish ascended the throne of Delhi, two *chatrs*, one white and the other black, were set upon the right and left of the throne.[20] Kaiqubad also had black and white *chatrs*.[21] When Sultan Jalal-u'd-din Khalji set out to meet 'Ala-u'd-din, a black *chatr* was over his head.[22] Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji also used black and white *chatrs*.[23] Firuz Shah Tughluq's *chatr* was black.[24] In the Deccan also these colours were generally favoured by the rulers. When 'Ali Shah became the rulers of

Dharwar, he set up a white *chatr* on his throne.[25] Apart from these two principal colours, other colours were also used. Kaiqubad had *chatrs* of red, green and vermilion.[26] 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji also had a red *chatr*.[27] 'Ala-u'd-din Bahman Shah kept a red *chatr* with him.[28] When Isma'il was conferred kingly powers, the nobles placed an orange-colour *chatr* over his head.[29]

These colours were chosen deliberately and had some symbolic significance. Black represented the glories and blessings of *Shab-i-Qadr*.[30] Whiteness symbolised the glory and sovereignty of the sun.[31] The black and white *chatrs* placed on both sides of Iltutmish were symbolic of his will to conquer the black and white of the world and achieve his ambitions.[32] Significantly, a black *chatr* was set over the bier of Iltutmish. The red *chatr* of Kaiqubad is compared with the rising sun,[33] while his green *chatr* was considered to represent the freshness and prosperity of the empire.[34]

The number of *chatrs* also had some superstitious significance which they tried to rationalize. Iltutmish marched to Delhi with two *chatrs*;[35] Muhammad bin Tughluq used seven on the battlefield.[36]

On no important occasion a sultan was without a *chatr* over his head.[37] When granting audience to ambassadors *chatrs* were spread on both sides.[38] When Kaiqubad set out to see his father, and when Jalal-u'd-din went to see 'Ala-u'd-din, *chatrs* were over their heads.[39]

The presence of the sultan was recognized by his *chatr* which he had to use, whether on a journey or at home.[40] When Qutb-u'd-din Aibek was declared as an independent ruler of Hindustan, he was granted *chatrs* by the Ghurid ruler.[41] An heir-apparent was usually granted a *chatr* at the time of nomination.[42] One who used the *chatr* without explicit permission from the sultan was condemned as a rebel. The cases of Sayyidi Maula, Yak Lakhi, and Jalal of Ma'bar are instances in point.[43]

The sultan could, however, himself grant *chatrs* to important rajas, military leaders or high officials. 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji awarded a red *chatr* to Malik Kafur,[44] and one to Rama Deva.[45] Mubarak Khalji awarded a *chatr* to Rai of Tilang,[46] Sultan Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq to Malik Qutb-u'd-din.[47] Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq awarded a white *chatr* to Banbuhna[48] and five to Burash (Bahadur Shah).[49] Muhammad bin Tughluq divided his army into three groups and conferred upon each commander a *chatr*.[50] Firuz Shah granted *chatrs* of different colours to Khan-i-Jahan, Khudawand Khan and Tatar Khan.[51] There was a custom known as *nisar-i-chatr* which meant distributing *alms* and charities in

order to ward off evil influences on the person of the sultan.[52]

'Alam

Ibn Khaldun informs us that the use of '*alam* (banners) in battles was an ancient custom. It was used during the time of the Prophet also, but during his time as well as that of the Pious Caliphs, these were used in battles only. Later on, they came to be used in courts and with royal processions.

'*Alams* of different colours were used by different dynasties. The Abbasids used black cloths for their '*alams*. They selected this colour in order to express their sorrow and resentment at the treatment of the Hashimites by the Omayyads. Mamun discarded black and started using green. It was during the time of *Muwahiddin* that the use of *naubat* and '*alam* became the exclusive privilege of the sultans. Nobles and dignitaries were not allowed to use these symbols of royal power. Amir Khusrau refers to the standard of 'Ala-u'd-din as "the successor of paradise tree" whose shadow was like a restless fish.[53] High standard was a symbol of greatness of the monarch.[54] Kaiqubad had two standards—one red and the other black which were set near the throne on the occasion of *Nauruz*.[55] One of his standards had moon embroidered on it. It was called *Mahi 'Alam*.[56] Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, when on a march, held black banners over his head which had a big snake of gold in the centre. The black banners were special to the sultan. Two red banners with two gold snakes were held on his left.[57]

Like *chatr*, '*alam* was also granted by the sultan to princes, rajas and high nobles as a special favour.

Kaiqubad granted '*Alam-i-zarrin* to Barbak.[58] 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji granted *chatr* to his eldest son and black standards to his other two sons.[59] Firuz Shah, pleased with the *rai* of Jajnagar, granted him an '*alam* and a *tabal* (drum).[60]

Durbash

The *durbash* was a kind of spear with two horns and branches, the wooden staff of which used to be studded with jewels and ornamented with gold and silver. It was carried before the sovereign when he issued forth, so that people perceiving it from a distance might know that the king was coming and that they might make way for him by standing on one side.[61]

Durbash was considered such an inalienable feature of kingship that the medieval historians have determined the duration of a monarch's

rule from the period he started using *durbash*.[62] Whenever any sultan marched out, he was accompanied, besides other things, by dazzling *durbashs* which struck awe and terror into the hearts of the spectators.[63] Generally these *durbashs* were studded with pearls and were carried by *jandars*.[64] It is recorded about Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji that wherever he went, he was accompanied by hundred *durbashs*.[65]

The *durbash* was granted to a prince as a mark of special favour and to announce his nomination as heir apparent. Qutb-u'd-din Aibek received a *durbash* with *chatr* from the heirs of Shihab-u'd-din[66] as a mark of recognition of his sovereignty. Iltutmish and 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji awarded *durbashs* to their eldest sons.[67] 'Ala-u'd-din withdrew these honours from Khizr Khan when he was displeased with him.[68]

Naubat

Playing *naubat* at the royal gate was an old Indian, as well as Persian, tradition. It comprised a number of instruments like trumpets, drums, fifes, glageolets etc. On all important occasions drums were beaten.[69] When Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq was to cross river Kosi, drums were beaten.[70] Muhammad bin Tughluq always carried with him 200 drums, fifty loaded kettle drums, twenty trumpets and ten brass castanets. The use of *naubat* was a privilege of the sultan but in exceptional cases its use was permitted to others as a mark of special favour. Muhammad bin Tughluq permitted the use of *naubat* to a Hindu *amir*, Ratan.[71] Firuz Shah Tughluq conferred a *tabal* upon the *rai* of Jajnagar.[72] Ibn Battuta thus refers to an Indian custom: "It is a custom, after the sultan has mounted, for the *amirs* to mount in groups every one of them with his troops, his standard, his drums, his bugles and hautboys. These are known as *maratib*. No one except the chamberlains, the musicians the drummers who hang small drums round their necks and those who play the hautboys rides in front of the sultan. About fifteen men ride to the sultan's right, and an equal number to his left among whom are the chief justices, the vezir and some of the principal *amirs* and some foreigners (*a'izza*). I was one of those who rode to the sultan's right. In his front march the footmen as well as the guides; behind him are carried the standards made of silk embroidered with gold, and drums are carried on camels. Behind these are the royal slaves and his entourage followed by the *amirs* and all the camp-followers (*an-nas*)."[73]

Taraz

Taraz was a piece of silken cloth on which the royal name was

embroidered. No other name could be embroidered on fabrics. Kaiqubad proclaimed proudly that he had occupied the throne wearing the *taraz* studded with gems (*ba gohar-i-tiroz*).[74] Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq introduced the name of *khalifah* on the *taraz*.[75]

Both necessity and tradition made the dress of the sultans different and distinct from others. Apart from the insignia of royalty, there were some items of dress which were exclusively used by the sultans. Besides the crown,[76] the sultans used to wear tall Tartar cap (*kulah*).[77] Raziya also wore *kulah* like men.[78] It was a four cornered or four sashed cap.[79] Sultan Firuz Shah liked very much the use of *kulah*.[80]

Dastars (fine muslin cloth wrapped round the turban) and *ammas* (turban, headdress) were also used by the sultans.[81] The sultan of Hinawar used a small turban round his head.[82] Raja Dahir is reported to have thrown his *dastar* in grief when he heard the news of his brother's death.[83] The Indians used silk (*abrisham* and *harir*) in their *dastars*.[84]

The upper garment used by the sultans was called *pairahan*.[85] It was some sort of cloak. Shirts studded with gold were also in use.[86] 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji gave to 'Ala-ul-Mulk a gold embroidered garment (*jama-i-zardozi*) with the picture of lion embroidered over it.[87]

During the winter season, *qaba* and *da'kla* (garment) were used.[88] The royal garments during the summer were made of *khaz* (linen) and *ibriz* (pure gold).[89] *Qaba* was open in front.[90] Kaiqubad put on his gown when seated on the throne.[91] Muhammad bin Tughluq used *tukalvat* and *chugha* as upper garments.[92]

Firuz Shah was wrapped in a *dawaj* (sheet), when he was crowned.[93] Muhammad bin Tughluq used Turkish coat.[94] A shirt was made of silken cloth studded with gold and a thin cloth was used as a hood.[95] The sultans used *kamar* (waistband) generally studded with pearls.[96]

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6. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, vol. III, p. 472.
7. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, p. 142.
8. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, vol. III, pp. 472-73.
9. Ibid., vol. IV, p. 78.

10. Mas'udi, vol. II, pp. 36-37, 280, 281.
11. The *chatr* of Kaiqubad was made of green *atlas, Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, p. 74.
12. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, pp. 26, 74, 77, 78, 91.
13. Ibid., pp. 74-78. The *chatr* which was sent by Yilduz to Iltutmish was studded with pearls (*Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 107). A *chatr* studded with costly gems and pearls was presented to 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji after the conquest of Deogir (*Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 234).
14. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 159. *Huma* is looked upon as a bird of happy omen, prognosticating a crown to every head it overshades.
15. *I'jaz-i-Khusrawi*, vol. I, p. 14.
16. *A'ina-i-Sikandari*, p. 17.
17. *An Arab Account of India in the 14th Century*, p. 75.
18. See, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. XI, p. 415.
19. Ibid., vol. XI, p. 416.
20. 'Isami, p. 108.
21. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, pp. 74-75.
22. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 343.
23. *I'jaz-i-Khusrawi*, vol. I, pp. 14, 34.
24. *Diwan-i-Mutahhar*, p. 173.
25. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 173.
26. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, pp. 74, 75, 77-78.
27. *Diwan-i-Hasan Sijzi*, p. 481.
28. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 554.
29. Ibid., p. 531.
30. *I'jaz-i-Khusrawi*, vol. I, p. 14.
31. Ibid., p. 34.
32. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 108.
33. Ibid., p. 129.
34. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, pp. 75-76.
35. Ibid., p. 76.
36. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 108.
37. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, vol. V, p. 97.
38. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, pp. 108, 492.
39. Ibid., pp. 193, 243.
40. *Rehla*, p. 49; *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, p. 125.
41. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 14.
42. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 18; Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 66, for *chatrs* granted by Iltutmish and Balban.
43. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, pp. 216, 366, 469.
44. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 326-27.
45. Ibid.
46. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 363.
47. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 14.
48. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 254.
49. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 422.
50. Ibid., p. 439.
51. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 124.
52. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 108.
53. *I'jaz-i-Khusrawi*, vol. I, p. 14.
54. *Hasht Bihisht*, p. 16; *Diwan-i-Hasan Sijzi*, p. 481.

55. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, p. 82.
56. Ibid., p. 100.
57. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, vol. V, pp. 96-97.
58. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, p. 93.
59. *Hasht Bihisht*, p. 74; see also *Khazain-ul-Futuh*, pp. 68-69.
60. *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, f. 91.
61. Raverty, fn, p. 607.
62. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 16.
63. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, pp. 50-51.
64. Ibid., p. 78; *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 560.
65. *I'jaz-i-Khusrawi*, vol. I, p. 34.
66. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 18.
67. *Khazain-ul-Futuh*, pp. 68-69; *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 80.
68. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 363.
69. Ibid., p. 416.
70. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, vol. V, 96-97.
71. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 9.
72. *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, MS.
73. *Rehla*, p. 136.
74. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, p. 125. See *I'jaz-i-Khusrawi*, vol. I, p. 13 for a reference to *taraz*.
75. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 493.
76. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 47; *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, pp. 83-84.
77. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, pp. 83-84.
78. 'Isami, p. 133.
79. *Deval Rani Khizr Khan*, pp. 37, 242.
80. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 136.
81. *Diwan-i-Hasan*, p. 408; *Diwan-i-Mutahhar*, p. 157.
82. *Rehla*, p. 181.
83. *Chach Nama*, p. 68.
84. Ibid., p. 123.
85. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 434; *Diwan-i-Hasan Sijzi*, p. 29; *Diwan-i-Mutahhar*, p. 157.
86. *Diwan-i-Mutahhar*, p. 188.
87. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 271.
88. Ibid., p. 273.
89. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, p. 44.
90. *Diwan-i-Hasan Sijzi*, p. 27.
91. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, pp. 83-84.
92. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, vol. V, p. 93.
93. 'Afif, p. 47.
94. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, vol. V, p. 93.
95. *Diwan-i-Mutahhar*, p. 188.
96. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, pp. 83-84.

CHAPTER 6

Personal Life, Routine and Features of the Sultans

Paucity of relevant material makes it difficult to depict in detail the personal features of the sultans and their daily life and routine. The *Fatawa-i-Jahandari* thus refers to the expectations of the people in this regard:

> "The essence of the king's recognition of his great blessing is that he realises the value of time and does not waste his time, which is more precious than the time of any other man. . . . After the performance of the necessary religious duties, he should devote himself only to administrative affairs and consider himself dedicated to public service. He should not throw away his precious life in the pursuit of pleasures. But properly attending to public business is not possible unless the king strictly allocates his time, both day and night, and assigns a period to every business and during that allotted period he does not leave that specific business to attend to some other work. So far as possible, he should attend exclusively to government business and not waste his precious life in frivolities, amours and useless things."[1]

But his was the ideal position. In actual practice personal interests and preferences, not kingly obligations, determined the routine of the sultans and kept them busy in their leisure hours. Voluptuousness and sense of responsibility rarely went hand in hand.

Aibek was an extremely dedicated and loyal Turkish officer[2] who took to kingly duties with an extraordinary sense of responsibility and keen interest in public welfare.[3] His generosity was such that he became known as *Lakh Bakhsh*[4] (bestower of lacs) and later generations used the word *Qutb-u'd-din* as a sobriquet for a person conspicuous for generosity.[5] He had received fairly good education and used to recite the *Qur'an* in such sonorous voice that he earned the epithet of *Qur'an khwan*.[6] His superb human qualities were appreciated by friend and foe alike.[7] He was very fond of playing *chaugan* (medieval polo) and often went to suburban areas in Lahore to play the game. He died in an accident while playing *chaugan*. His physical fatures were not attractive.[8] Besides, his little finger was deformed.[9]

Iltutmish also was an outstanding figure of the Ghurid ruling

oligarchy—brave, just, pious and devoted. In intrepidity, remarks Minhaj, "He turned out to be another . . . Ali and in liberality a second Hatim-i-Tai".[10] Nothing is known about his physical features but he had some natal marks on his head which distinguished him even later in life.[11]

Iltutmish was, by nature and association, a man of mystic temperament.[12] He used to spend his nights in prayer and meditation.[13] His anxiety to help the poor and the destitute, the orphans and the widows was extraordinary.[14] Even at night he attended to the calls of the oppressed and had a bell at his gate which any person in difficulty or distress could ring to get his audience.[15] He was on the best of terms with the saints of the Chishti and the Suhrawardi *silsilahs*.[16] Delegations of '*ulama* also waited upon him.[17] He was keenly interested in the education of his sons and daughter. He procured from Baghdad books for their instruction.[18] After the death of his eldest son, Iltutmish had a painful realization of the incompetence of his other sons.[19] He left a mark of his personality on the canvas of history. His buildings—the Qutb Minar and the Masjid-i-Quwwat-ul-Islam—added to the glory and grandeur of his name.

Ignoring Iltutmish's preference for Raziya, the nobles raised Rukn-u'd-din Firuz to the throne. He possessed three laudable qualities: handsome features, gentle temperament and unbounded generosity.[20] But he gave himself up to pleasures and sexual enjoyments after his accession. State affairs fell into utter confusion. Minhaj concludes his account of Rukn-u'd-din with these remarks:

> "It is essential above all things, that sovereigns should have justice in order that their subjects should dwell in tranquillity and repose, and that they possess beneficence so that their followers may be satisfied and contented; and revelry and merriment, and companionship with the base and ignoble, becomes the means of an empire's ruin."[21] Perhaps he had Iltutmish in mind when he made these comments on the life-pattern of his successor.

Raziya's elevation to the throne was a very bold Turkish experiment.[22] Her political vision and firm handling of the situation show that Iltutmish had not neglected her education and training. She proved herself better qualified to rule than the sons of Iltutmish. In fact Iltutmish had nominated her as his successor. He left Raziya in charage of the capital when he set out on Gwaliyar expedition.[23] Besides, he included her name in a series of the silver *tankah*.[24] It appears that she had given her accession the form of a contract. She told the people that

they could depose her if she did not fulfil their expectations.[25] It shows Raziya's boundless confidence in her capacity to handle a fluid political situation. Minhaj aptly remarks that "she was endowed with all the admirable attributes and qualities necessary for kings."[26] But her gender was her greatest disqualification. She wanted to have direct control of affairs but *purdah* (seclusion) stood in the way. The throne on which she sat used to be separated from the courtiers and the public by a screen. The arrangement was such that female guards stood next to her and then those related to her by ties of blood.[27] Raziya abandoned her female attire and appeared in public with the *quba* (cloak) on her body and a *kulah* (hat) over her head. She rode out on the back of an elephant and transacted business like other sultans. The public, Minhaj says, could clearly see her.

Raziya had to face a difficult political situation. The Turkish nobility created difficulties for her and provoked discontent and rebellion in provinces. Acting with great political sagacity, she married Altuniah in whose custody the Turkish *amirs* had placed her. The impression that there was something shady in her preference for Jamal-u'd-din Yaqut is baseless. What antagonized the Turkish *maliks* and *amirs* against her was her policy of creating counterpoise of nobility against the Turkish aristocracy. No reliance can be placed on the bachelor 'Isami's misogynist approach in dealing with Raziya's character.

Mu'izz-u'd-din Bahram was by nature unassuming and frank. He did not use jewellery, girdles, silken garments or banners.[28] But he had some serious shortcomings. Minhaj calls him *khunkhwar* (blood-thirsty) and 'Isami condemns him on account of his venery and ferocity.[29] When Mongols occupied Lahore and the people of Delhi became restive, he arranged a sermon of Minhaj and people renewed allegiance (*bayt*) to him.[30]

'Ala-u'd-din Mas'ud who succeeded Bahram, was of pleasant manners before his accession but later he threw himself in revelry and hunting.[31] His successor, Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud, was an able prince and had given evidence of his administrative abilities as governor of Bahraich at the age of 16. But, on ascending the throne he had to cut himself off completely from administration. This was due to the Machiavellian tactics of Balban[32], who wanted to keep him only as a puppet king.[33] He found escape from the tyranny of the situation in his prayers and in copying the *Qur'an*.[34] The deeper he went in his prayers and penitences, lesser became the sting of the situation. Nasir-u'd-din was not the son but the grandson of Iltutmish. After the death of his eldest son Iltutmish

gave this name to his posthumous child.[35]

It is said that when Balban was presented before Iltutmish by the Chinese merchants, he declined to purchase him as he read signs of intrigue and ambition on his face.[36] But when the wazir, Kamal-u'd-din Junaidi, presented him, he accepted him as a decree to fate, but put him to work in the royal stables. The Turks protested and said that it was below the dignity of a Turk to perform menial work. Balban was then put in charge of royal falcons.[37] Thus admitted to the imperial service, Balban soon made his mark and made steady progress.

He attained such prestige and influence that Iltutmish married one of his daughters to him. This opened Balban's way to usurpation of power. He got deeply involved in the politics of the sultanate in the post-Iltutmish period. During the time of Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud all strings of administration came into his hands. Disgusted with his behaviour, Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud dismissed him in 1253, and appointed 'Imad-u'd-din Raihan in his place. With Turkish nobility at his beck and call, Balban managed his return to power. He pushed Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud to the background, made him a titular figure and started using *chatr*, *durbash* and the other insignia of royalty.[38] He even appeared in the court with *chatr* over his head. It was under these circumstances that Nasir-u'd-din withdrew more and more from active royal life. Balban made free use of the dagger and assassin to consolidate his position. He got Malik Qutb-u'd-din Hasan assassinated in the court as he had uttered some sarcastic remarks when Balban had appeared in the court with *chatr* over his head.[39]

'Isami has recorded an interesting incident of his life during this period. Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud had two sons who used to associate and play with the sons of Balban. One day the princes in reply to the taunts of Balban's sons about the wisdom of their father said: "We can, by a trick, bring your father from the horse to the ground". Balban's sons offered a bet of eighty gold *dinars*. The next day one of the princes dropped his whip in the riding field and when Balban happened to pass by that way, they asked him for it. Balban got down from his horse to pick it up. When Balban's sons informed their father of the bet, he was perturbed and began to brood: "If these princes are so deceitful at this age, they would one day arrest me by trick and strategem and shed my blood."[40] Thereafter Balban planned to end the life of Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. He locked him up in a room where he died of hunger and thirst.[41] Some historians say that Balban had poisoned Nasir-u'd-din.[42]

The view that Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud had no son is not correct.

Minhaj refers to the birth of a son in 657 AH. The list of *maliks* and princes given at the beginning of the account of Sultan Nasir-u'd-din contains four names of his offsprings.[43] Perhaps they were removed by Balban.[44]

Balban's life during the period of his khanate was one of convivialism. After his accession he gave up completely drinking and vivacious activities. Barani informs us:

> "He took a vow of repentance against the use of intoxicants ... and the name of wine ... never came to his lips. At the same time he took with excess to religious devotions, supererogatory fasts and standing in prayer during the night. He suddenly became regular in attending the Friday and congregational prayers."[45]

Balban's family life was regulated by three guiding principles: restricted *haram*, limited number of children and thorough education of sons in the art of government. Bughra Khan thus recalled his father's interest in education:

> "When I and my elder brother had learnt word-meaning and the calligraphists had taught writing, our tutors petitioned to the sultan: What are the *shahzadas* to be taught after this—etymology, grammar or jurisprudence?... My father's order was as follows: "The calligraphists be dismissed after being given dresses and *inams*. My sons are to be taught what wise historians and eminent *dabirs* have written. They are to be taught the books, *Adab-us-Salatin* ... and *Ma'asir-us-Salatin* which were brought from Baghdad for the sons of my master, Sultan Shams-u'd-din. Hereafter only experienced secretaries (*dabirs*) who are well-acquainted with history and the affairs of great men are to be in the company of my sons. . . . We two brothers read the *Adab-us-Salatin* from the beginning to the end with Khwaja Taj-u'd-din Bukhari, who was a courtier of Sultan Shams-u'd-din. When we had finished the book, we were presented before the sultan who gave Khwaja Taj-u'd-din . . . two villages and a lac of *jitals* in *inam*."[46]

Though both the sons were brought up under strict vigilance of their father, their personalities developed on different lines. Prince Muhammad became an embodiment of learning and culture and never indulged in frivolous pursuits. Bughra Khan took to entirely different pursuits and developed the habit of drinking. Balban chided him for his habits[47], but to no avail. We find him drinking even in the company of his son, Kaiqubad.[48]

Balban's personal features were impressive and awe-inspiring. A believer in Divine support and guidance, Balban raised royalty to a high and dignified pedestal. For forty years he had all the strings of

administration in his own hands and watched the developments around him like "an old wolf".[49] An efficient sleuth system kept him fully informed about whatever happened in Delhi or in distant parts of the empire. He was, very kind to the loyal and obedient[50] but was hard-hearted and tyrannical where state interest or prestige was involved. He never hesitated in inflicting the most stringent punishments on rebels. He crossed all limits of moderation and equanimity in punishing people, sometimes a whole population suspected of insurgency or sedition. Divine nemesis for such wanton slaughter of men and women awaited him in his old age. His son Prince Muhammad, who was the hope of the dynasty, met his tragic end at the hands of the Mongols. It dashed to the ground all his dream about the future of the family. He painfully realized that kingship could no longer last in his family. He sat in the court throughout the day with his usual composure, dignity and majesty but when he retired he put dust in his hair and wept. A story mentioned by 'Isami gives a very melancholic touch to this tragedy of Balban's closing years. An old widow had one son whom the sultan ordered to be executed. The widow represented to the sultan and pleaded for the son who was innocent. The sultan did not mind her pleas for it was not his way to change his decisions. After the execution of the boy, it became a daily routine with the widow that at the dead of the night she would appear under the shadow of the imperial palace and loudly lament the death of her son and cry for divine justice. The palace guards used all possible means to stop her lamentations but to no avail. She would somehow appear and start loud wailings. The night Prince Muhammad was killed in Multan, the old woman did not appear near the palace wall. All efforts to trace her failed.[51] This story, whatever its authenticity, appears as a tragic denouement to Balban's life.

Kaiqubad's rise to power marked a total departure from the traditions of royalty zealously built up by Balban.[52] The lewd atmosphere of his court was in sharp contrast to the sobriety and decency of his grandfather's darbar. But he was an extremely handsome prince with "excellent character and pleasing manners."[53] Brought up under the strict stoic discipline of Balban, he had neither looked at a fair face, nor tasted a cup of wine.[54] However, after his accession he threw himself headlong into revelries. His new palace at Kilugarhi became a rendezvous of musicians, dancing girls, jokers and wits.[55] *Maliks*, *amirs*, high officers and the city elite built houses in its vicinity and the entire area resounded with fun, frolic and festivities. However, the desire to

eliminate possible rivals to the throne was so irresistible in him that he killed Prince Muhammad's son Kaikhusrau, an action which brought forth criticism from Bughra Khan also. He did not offer his prayers regularly. Some misguided and worldly *'ulama* gave him a *fatwa* (religious verdict) that he could even give up fasting during the month of Ramazan.[56]

The founder of the Khalji dynasty, Jalal-u'd-din, was seventy years of age when he ascended the throne. He gave expression to his feelings—genuine or feigned—regarding the transient and ephemeral nature of human glory and his deep respect for his predecessors.[57] On several occasions, to the utter disgust of the young Khalji group which wanted him to be more assertive and aggressive in the dealings, he sank headlong in pleasure-pursuits and sauntered his time either in playing chess or hearing music. Barani's account of the court musicians, both male and female, is characterized by singularly powerful portrayal of the convivial atmosphere of his court. Mehr Afroz and Nusrat Bibi were beauties unsurpassed and unique in their blandishments and courtesanship.[58]

Barani gave him the title of *Sultan al-Halim* in view of his mild and clement nature, in sharp contrast with both Balban and 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji. 'Ala-u'd-din's seditious planning against his uncle and father-in-law was not so much the result of his inordinate ambition and chicanery as the utter incompetence of Jalal and his failure to come up to the expectations of the Khalji oligarchy which had brought him to power.

'Ala-u'd-din Khalji was an alien to the world of learning. He had neither himself received any formal education nor made proper arrangements for the education of his sons.[59] In state matters his chief advisers were Malik Hamid-u'd-din, Malik 'Izz-u'd-din and 'Ain-ul-Mulk Mahru.[60] He rarely discussed political matters with the *'ulama*. His approach towards life was practical, free from all emotional limitations. He was averse to convivialism in any form and firmly checked its trends in public life. He visualized state as an agency for moral and ethical uplift of the society and worked towards it. Zia-u'd-din Barani has highlighted the militaristic aspect of his market control, but the fact remains that he was largely inspired by altruistic motives.[61] He believed that cheapness of corn was of universal benefit,[62] and to alleviate the misery of the people he brought down its price and sternly checked *ihtakar* (regrating and hoarding). His prohibitionary measures[63] and steps against sexual crimes[64] succeeded because his own life was free from such blemishes. He was not punctilious in the performance of his

obligatory prayers, but had deep faith in God and often turned to Him in humble supplication.[65] He was illiterate but the gap in learning was filled by his long experience and military training. His recreation was field sports and flying hawks.[66] Vigilant and far sighted, he did not undertake any military campaign which could take him away from the capital for long periods.

The age of 'Ala-u'd-din saw an unprecedented assemblage of erudite and distinguished scholars and saints in Delhi. He did not show the same dedication to them as Balban had shown to the celebrities of his reign, but nevertheless was not lacking in distant respect.[67] The respect that his memory enjoyed after his death was unique in the history of medieval India. People tied threads on his grave expecting fulfilment of their desires on account of the blessings of his soul.[68]

Qutb-u'd-din Mubarak Khalji was a Bacchanal. He changed the entire atmosphere of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji's court. Except prohibition which he continued,[69] he terminated all the regulations of his father. Details about his education are not available. Only a reference is found in Barani to Qazi Zia-u'd-din, the *Vakil-i-dar*, as his tutor in calligraphy. He was indifferent to social morality and was vain and conceited. The intelligence department of the early period became defunct and sleuths turned into idlers.[70]

The Tughluq sultans were men of character and learning. The moral vices which had become a feature of the lives and activities of rulers like Kaiqubad, Jalal-u'd-din and Mubarak, had not touched them. They improved the moral tone of society, encouraged philosophy and jurisprudence, and initiated a brisk policy of improving agriculture and promoting projects of public welfare.

Sultan Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq, who had spent a major part of his life on the battlefield, had an excellent character. Chroniclers have referred to his laudable qualities of head and heart.[71] He never indulged in sexual proclivities.[72] Pious, large-hearted, full of valour and wisdom, he endeared himself to people who admired his personal qualities.[73] During his stay at Multan and Dipalpur he had established cordial relations with the saints and religious figures of the region.[74] Free from arrogance and pride[75], he displayed remarkable moderation in his dealings with people. He helped many old families to recover their lost position.[76] Concern for the welfare of the people[77] kept him engaged all the time. He offered all prayers in congregation and never went to his *haram* before offering '*Isha* prayers.[78] Barani has particularly referred to his respect for *shari'at* laws. He took people to task for drinking[79] and

punished those who flouted rules of *ihtisab* (censorship of public morals). He chastised people who had arranged the marriage of Khusrau Khan's widow only three days after the former's execution[80], in contravention of the *shari'at* rules. Paying his tribute to the sultan's sense of justice, Barani says:

> ". . . owing to Tughluq Shah's excessive justice and equity it was not possible for the wolf to look fiercely at the goat and the tiger and the deer drank water at the same place. For the enforcement of the orders of the *shari'at*, the *qazis*, *muftis*, *dadbeks* and the *muhtasibs* of his reign had great power and dignity."[81]

Muhammad bin Tughluq was endowed with equally commendable excellence of character as his father. His vast erudition and scholarly temperament further added to the charisma of his personality. Scholars from distant Muslim lands—Syria, Central Asia, Egypt etc.—were impressed by his vast range of knowledge and scholarly bearing. The authors of *Masalik-ul-Absar*, *Subh-ul-A'sha*, *al-A'yan-ul-'Asr* and *al-Durar al-Kaminah* pay eloquent tribute to his erudition and scholarly interests.

Muhammad bin Tughluq never revelled in luxuries, or wine drinking. He also never allowed courtesans and fallen women to gather round him.[82] He did not like to glance at any woman whom *shari'at* had declared *na-mahrum* (strangers, not allowed to enter female apartments).[83] He was respectful towards his elders, relations and teachers. He showed great respect to Qutlugh Khan who had taught him during childhood.[84]

Muhammad bin Tughluq was, however, interested in music and kept twelve hundred musicians in his service, besides one thousand slave musicians.[85] His music gatherings were free from all sorts of immoral activities.[86] He hated wine so much that wine was not available in Delhi during his time.[87] He was punctilious in his prayers, and, for the first time in the history of the Delhi Sultanate, had issued orders for punishing those who neglected their obligatory prayers. He married his sisters and daughters into religious families, ignoring entirely the traditions of royalty.

On the basis of the stray remarks of Barani and other chroniclers, Dr. Mahdi Husain has given the following description of the physical features of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq:

> "A man of more than middle height, his person was endowed with a particular grace or excellence. He possessed a superbly stout body—strong limbs, long arms, broad chest, large and open forehead and dignified and noble countenance. His face, with its remarkably white complexion, thick but skilfully trimmed beard and moustache, wide,

square like eyes, straight and moderate nose, thin and reddish lips, a fleshy and muscular neck, and a large round skull, covered with a closely-set oval cap tapering towards the top, exercised a magnetic charm. He used to wear a sash round his waist and rings on the last two fingers of his left hand. On the whole he was very beautiful and possessed of great personal charm, which was immensely heightened by his physical, intellectual and moral equipment."[88]

Firuz Shah Tughluq's personal features have been briefly referred to by 'Afif. According to him, the Sultan "was fair-complexioned, having a high nose and a long beard. He was neither too tall nor too short."[89] In his early years he had lived an Epicurean life but gave it up completely after his accession to the throne. He had an amiable temperament, generous and full of affection for family members, like the grandson of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, Khudawandzada Begum, sister of Muhammad bin Tughluq and his own stepbrothers. He was extremely fond of hunting and sports. Surprisingly enough, despite all his emphasis on meticulous adherence to *shari'at* law in every detail of administration, he could not give up wine. He promised Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar and Tatar Khan to give up drinking, but could not keep his promise.[90] The *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi* reveals him as a strict follower of *shari'at* law in every walk of life. He was anxious to introduce and adopt *shari'at* restrictions in matters of general administration, fiscal laws, planning and decoration of palaces. He adopted stern measures to check *ibahati* (incestuous) trends, thus being successful in giving Delhi a clean moral atmosphere.

The successors of Firuz Shah Tughluq were utterly incompetent to deal with fissiparous tendencies which were the order of the day. The *amirs* and the *maliks* drew sustenance out of turbulence and carved out their areas of influence. Timur's invasion gave a further blow to the weak and vacillating authority of the Delhi sultan. The Sayyid sultans who succeeded the Tughluqs could not shoulder the burden of administering an empire covering a large part of the country. The sultanate shrank in dimensions. The Sayyids did not make any worthwhile contribution to the political or the cultural life of medieval India. Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Shah, the last of the Sayyid rulers, left Delhi in the hands of his wife's brothers as *shahna-i-shahr* (superintendent of the city) and *amir-i-kohi* (in charge of agriculture) and himself settled in Badaon. Born under the stress of Timurid invasion, the Sayyid dynasty disappeared in the midst of baronial conspiracies.

The founder of the Lodi dynasty, Bahlul Lodi, was a ruler of simple and unostentatious habits. According to Rizq-ul-lah Mushtaqi, he

treated the nobles and the soldiers on an equal footing with himself.[91] An antithesis of Balban in political approach and outlook, he shunned the royal paraphernalia and kept no personal guards.[92] He used to sit on a large carpet with all his nobles, disdaining any discrimination of whatever form. He visited the houses of ailing nobles and soldiers and offered his obligatory prayers in congregation.[93] He had a set routine which he meticulously followed. He got up early, attended to the state business, signed documents, issued orders to governors and military commanders and performed judicial functions. From noon till *'Isha* (bed-time), he was in the company of the *'ulama* and scholars. After *'Isha* prayers he was in *haram* for some time. Meals were served after that.

Sikandar Lodi possessed great physical charm.[94] A *majzub* (mystic overpowered by cosmic emotion) of Rapri, Shaikh Hasan, had fallen in love with him.[95] He shaved his beard and defended his practice by saying that hair on his chin was broomy.

Mushtaqi calls Sikandar "magnanimous, religious, brave and just".[96] Incidents of his reign reveal him as a generous and conscientious ruler with fascination for scholars and literary men. He offered his obligatory prayers in congregation.[97] According to Nizam-u'd-din Bakhshi, when state work kept him busy all through the day, he offered his prayers in one sitting.[98] He used simple dress, and never put on new clothes till his old clothes became tattered and useless.[99] Ahmad Yadgar informs us that he gave his night dress and bed every day to orphan girls for dowry.[100]

Sikandar attended to kingly functions very early in the morning. At night be gave private audiences.[101] Meal was served at midnight. The *'ulama* who attended these dinners were not allowed to partake their food in the royal presence. They took their share home.

Ibrahim Lodi had a reputation for piety and generosity. He was however interested in music and kept a troupe of dancing girls at the court. He believed in astrology also.

So far as the personal qualities of the sultans of Delhi were concerned, Iltutmish's mystic temperament, Balban's court decorum and Muhammad bin Tughluq's erudition were unique in those days. In physical charm Rukn-u'd-din Firuz, Kaiqubad and Sikandar Lodi excelled the other sultans. Aibek lacked in outward comeliness. Muhammad bin Tughluq had become impotent[102] but otherwise he had a very robust and impressive personality. In convivial activities, the septuagenarian Jalal had outpaced young rulers like Kaiqubad and Mubarak. The hoofs of

Iltutmish's horses, as Amir Khusrau puts it, had raised dust up to Malwa; 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji's forces had knocked down the Hindu state-system of the south but non excelled Muhammad bin Tughluq in continuous military operations over a vast area for a long period.

References

1. Text, pp. 147-56; tr., p. 41.
2. *Taj-ul-Ma'asir*, MS, p. 116.
3. Ibid., MS, p. 338.
4. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah*, p. 51; *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, p. 138.
5. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, vol. I, p. 42; Ferishta, vol. I, p. 63.
6. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah*, p. 21.
7. *Taj-ul-Ma'asir*, MS, p. 118.
8. Raverty, p. 513.
9. Ibid.
10. Raverty, p. 598.
11. Badaoni, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, vol. I, pp. 68-69.
12. See Nizami, "Iltutmish, the Mystic", in *Islamic Culture*, April 1946, pp. 165-80.
13. *Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad*, p. 213; *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 107-08.
14. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, p. 165; *Jawami-'ul-Kalim*, p. 269.
15. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, pp. 52-53.
16. *Salatin-i-Delhi kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 114-27.
17. Ibid., pp. 105-06, 111-12. See also Barani, *Sahifa Na't-i-Muhammadi*, MS, Rampur.
18. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 144-45.
19. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, p. 185.
20. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Habibi, p. 454.
21. Raverty, p. 637.
22. Shaikh Abd-ul-Haqq (*Tarikh-i-Haqqi*, f. 9b) has expressed his surprise at the tacit acceptance of her accession by the *'ulama* of those days. Salic law also excludes females from dynastic succession.
23. Ferishta, vol. I, p. 68; 'Isami, p. 126; Iltutmish entrusted her with the royal seal.
24. *JASB*, 1896, p. 218, no. 30; Wright (p. 40, no. 161) ascribes the issue to Raziya herself.
25. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 132. See also Ibn Battuta, *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, vol. II, p. 54.
26. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, p. 185.
27. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 128.
28. Raverty, p. 649.
29. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 137.
30. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, p. 195.
31. Ibid., p. 201.
32. See Nizami, *Studies in Medieval Indian History and Culture*, chapter on 'Balban, the Regicide'.
33. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 26.
34. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 156.
35. Ibid., p. 145. Elphinstone (*The History of India*, London, 1866, p. 377) also believed in this relationship, but Raverty (p. 669, fn 8) has criticised this view. 'Isami is very specific on this point.

36. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, pp. 122-23.
37. Ibid., p. 123.
38. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 26. See also, *Tarikh-i-Muhammadi*, f. 359a. According to 'Isami he feigned to have fallen ill and when asked about the reason for illness, said that he had fallen ill in his longing for the *chatr-i-supaid*. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 158.
39. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, pp. 158-61.
40. Ibid., p. 163.
41. Nur-ul-Haqq, *Zubdat-al-Tawarikh*, MS, f. 16a,b.
According to Ibn Battuta Balban killed the sultan, *Rehla*, text, II, p. 22. That Balban used to end the life of his opponents by depriving them of water and food (*bi nani-o-bi abi*) is clear from Barani (p. 48).
42. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 163.
43. The oldest MS of *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* has *awlad* (progeny). The printed text gives *aqraba*. Raverty rightly observes: "It is remarkable that our author is silent as to their births after mentioning their names" (p. 672).
44. Barani makes it clear that whomsoever Balban considered his rival or obstacle to his attaining the throne, he got him poisoned or killed. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 47-48.
45. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 45-46.
46. Ibid., pp. 144-45.
47. Ibid., pp. 93-94.
48. Ibid., p. 144.
49. Ibid., p. 132.
50. Ibid., p. 385.
51. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, pp. 182-83.
52. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 128.
53. Ibid., p. 127.
54. Ibid., p. 128.
55. Ibid., p. 130.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid., pp. 178-80.
58. Ibid., pp. 199-200.
59. Ibid., p. 334.
60. Ibid., p. 282.
61. *Khair-ul-Majalis*, p. 241.
62. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 304, 309, 316.
63. Ibid., pp. 342-43. *Khaza'in-ul-Futuh*, tr., pp. 10-11.
64. *Khaza'in-ul-Futuh*, tr., p. 12; Barani, p. 336; *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, I, p. 168.
65. *Khair-ul-Majalis*, pp. 240-41; *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 238-39.
66. Barani, pp. 331-32, 345.
67. Ibid., p. 289; *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 229-30ff.
68. *Khair-ul-Majalis*, pp. 241-42.
69. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 384.
70. Ibid., p. 385.
71. Ibid., p. 443; *Tarikh-i-Muhammadi*, 398bf. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 92.
72. Barani, p. 443.
73. Ibid.; *Tarikh-i-Muhammadi*, 398bf. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 92.
74. See *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 309 et seq.
75. Barani, p. 427.
76. Ibid.
77. Ibid., pp. 441-43.

78. Ibid., p. 443.
79. Ibid., pp. 443-44; *Tarikh-i-Haqqi*, MS, 29af; Ferishta, I, p. 130.
80. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 426.
81. Ibid., p. 441.
82. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 460; *Tarikh-i-Haqqi*, MS, 32af.
83. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 506.
84. Ibid.
85. *Masalik-ul-Absar*, p. 32.
86. Ibid., p. 52.
87. Ibid.
88. *Rise and Fall of Muhammad bin Tughluq*, p. 196.
89. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 20.
90. 'Afif, pp. 79, 147. Firuz was found drinking by Tatar Khan who had abruptly appeared in his bedroom. Firuz concealed the bottle under his bedcover.
91. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi;* MS, p. 9.
92. Ibid.
93. Ibid., p. 10.
94. Halim, *History of the Lodis*, p. 109.
95. *Akhbar-ul-Akhyar*, p. 281.
96. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, MS, p. 10.
97. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, MS, 38f.
98. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, vol. I, p. 335.
99. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, MS, 39f.
100. *Tarikh-i-Shahi*, p. 49.
101. Halim, *History of Lodi Sultans of Delhi and Agra*, p. 112.
102. *Al-Durar al-Kaminah*, Hyderabad, 1349 AH, vol. III, p. 461; *Kitab al-Wafi bil-Wafayat*, Damascus, 1953, vol. III, p. 172. It is said that he was cauterized in the spine on account of some ailment.

CHAPTER 7

Royal Amusements, Sports, Pastimes and Festivals

The strain of hectic military and political activity could be lightened by amusements, sports and festivities. Most of the amusements were arranged inside the palace, but some sports were enjoyed by the sultans in the open.

Hunting

Hunting was a popular diversion from routine state business. Medieval political treatises, like *Qabus Namah*,[1] have emphasized its importance for kings. The sultans marched in the jungles with thousands of attendants and hunted beasts and birds in large numbers. A separate department, known as *Shikar khanah*, was maintained to arrange their hunting excursions. An officer, called *Amir-i-Shikar*, was in charge of this department. Falcons of different kinds like *bag, gaz, charkh, shahin, sanqar, basha* etc.[2] were specially trained and domesticated to hunt birds. Balban was interested in hunting expeditions. Barani gives the following account of his hunting schedule:

> "Sultan Balban considered the winter months a blessing and prayed for their return with great earnestness. He had given firm orders that for ten, twenty, or thirty *kurohs* (about sixty miles) round the capital, the hunting fields and the meadows were to be preserved and no game was to be killed. During the period of his khanate and his kingship, the hunting officers (*Mir-i-Shikars*) attained great dignity and status . . . specialists in training falcons enjoyed honour and fortune. There were many high-breed falcons in the royal falconry, and the sultan employed a large number of bird-catchers and falcon-trainers. During the winter Sultan Balban would ride out of the Ruby Palace towards the end of the night and the city gate was opened at that hour. He would go every day up to Rewari or even further, hunting the animals and flying his falcons; after a third of the night had passed, he would return to the city with the beating of drums; the city gates were kept open till midnight. The sultan . . . never remained outside during the night; he would return to the city after one-third, one-half or two-thirds of the night had passed. He had one thousand old horsemen from his army as a *khan*, every one of whom he knew personally, and also one thousand *paik* and archers,

> and had been long in his service and whom he trusted. Both groups accompanied the sultan in his hunting trips and got cooked and uncooked[3] food from his kitchen."[4]

Barani says that Hulagu had praised Balban's political wisdom in thus keeping his soldiers active and alert. But this compliment, if paid at all by Hulagu, should refer to his khanate days because Balban ascended the throne (1266-87) two years after the death of Hulagu (ob. 1264).

While Balban undertook his hunting excursions during the winter, Firuz Shah Tughluq went out for hunting in almost every season of the year. He looked upon hunting as one of the essential pursuits of great kings. Barani says that he could write two volumes—*Shikar Namah-i-Firuz Shahi*—about the sultan's interest and achievements in hunting expeditions. Iltutmish, Balban and 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji hunted birds with the help of tamed eagles during the winter only.[5] They were not fond of big game. Kaiqubad took his trained hunting dogs with him and used them for capturing deer.[6] He hunted many wild animals on his way to meet Bughra Khan. Mubarak Khalji once went for hunting in the direction of Badaon and kept himself busy in hunting animals for two or three months. He had with him large number of sparrow-hawks, kites, falcons, hawks and two to three thousand deer-hunting panthers.[7] 'Isami, writing in 1350, at least three decades after Mubarak, remarks: "If today anybody visits that meadow where the Emperor had hunted in those days, one would find the land, end to end, to a distance of several *parasangs* full of bones."[8] Mubarak took his whole *haram* with him on his hunting expeditions.[9]

Firuz Shah Tughluq used to make very elaborate arrangements for his hunting excursions. Huge equipment and paraphernalia, tents and carpets, nets, traps and cages in which chained lions could be put, were taken with him. Forty-five flags representing different types of *shikar* (game) were with him. With a peacock parasol over his head he moved to the jungles accompanied by a contingent of soldiers. A number of trained wild beasts—like *chitas* (panthers), *seyah gosh* (lynx), dogs etc. were taken by him for the hunting purpose. Sarsuti and Dibalpur, Badaon and Anoala were his favourite hunting grounds, because deer, antelopes etc. were found there in large numbers. Sometimes, the abundance of animals killed created problems of hygiene. 'Afif has informed us that some people dried meat and brought it to Delhi, obviously to be marketed. Firuz Shah was particularly interested in big game and killed tigers, lions, wolves, wild bears, deer, wild dogs and

antelopes. Besides, he hunted foxes, partridges, hares, parrots, crows and nightingales. He was interested in killing wild elephant also.[10] Wherever elephants were expected to be in large numbers, the army besieged the area. Fire was lighted and the elephants were encircled in such a way that they could not possibly break the siege. According to Yahya Sirhindi, Firuz Shah hunted elephants and lions in lines.[11] The *shikar* party used to recite the following verses in the field:

"Before thy arrow, for rejection and acceptance
The milk of deer becomes blood of lions (turns into milk) out of fear.
Before thy two-headed arrow, in order to perform his prostration,
The lion curves his back like the horns of a stag.
I have heard that owing to this, lion of the earth (i.e. the king)
The lion of the sky has been (crying to God)
Save me, O Rescuer."[12]

A distinguished Chishti saint of the period, Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar of Hansi reprimanded Firuz for his excessive interest in hunting.[13] Muhammad bin Tughluq is also reported to have objected to his over-involvement in hunting excursions.[14]

Muhammad bin Tughluq's hunting excursions have been thus described by al-Qalqashandi: "When he goes out for hunting, he puts on light dress and there are about one lakh horsemen and two hundred elephants with him. He carries four pavilions (*qusur*) with him upon eight hundred camels. Each pavilion is carried by a hundred camels all of which are trapped in silken covers inter-woven with gold. Each pavilion consists of two parts besides the tents and *khargahs* (pavilions). If he moves from one place to another for diversion or something like it, he keeps with him about three hundred horsemen and one thousand extra saddled and bridled horses which are caparisoned with covers interwoven with gold and have necklaces in which gems and diamonds are set."[15] The sultan had ordered manufacture of new tools and instruments for use in hunting.[16] The tent enclosure (*seracha*) of the sultan was red in colour; all other tents were white dotted with blue.[17] Ibn Battuta once accompanied the Sultan on a hunting excursion. The sultan mounted on an elephant and started after the *'Asr* (afternoon) prayers. No body was informed about the place of halt. The sons of the *maliks* roasted meat, chicken, cranes etc. for the sultan's table.[18]

Some interesting references to practices with regard to birds and animals of prey are found in medieval literature. Wild asses (*qor-khar*) were caught, branded with royal seal and set free.[19] Deer could be attracted by a particular musical tone.[20]

Chaugan (Medieval polo)

Chaugan or *goi bakhtan* was also a popular game with the royalty and the nobility. According to Abul Fazl, it was an excellent method of training both the performer and his horse. He writes: "The game was played after several manners. Firstly, one of the parties placed the ball in the hollow of his bat and trundled it slowly towards the *jal* or pit which was called *rowl*. Then the adversary skilfully caught hold of the ball into his bat and flung it away forcibly before the other could approach him. This process was called *beylah*, which was performed in several ways either by throwing the ball towards the right or to the left, and the other person frequently snatched it from between the horse's leg and from under his body; and when the ball came to the front, he caught it upon the pit, a kettle drum was then beaten signifying the end of the game; and the victory of the person, who threw the ball into the pit. Balls of *palas* (sackcloth) were used to play the game at night."[21]

Qutb-u'd-din Aibek was very fond of playing *chaugan*.[22] He used to go out to the suburbs every day[23] to play the game, which eventually resulted in his death. Kaiqubad had received regular instruction from his teachers in the game.[24] Some of the sultans were fond of lance throwing and horse racing. Jalal-u'd-din Khalji used to sit in the palace cupola, and watch polo being played in the second courtyard.[25]

Indoor Games

Among the indoor games enjoyed by the sultans were different types of chess and dice, *nard, gira bazi* and *ka'batain*.[26] Kaiqubad played these games with young girls.[27] Jalal-u'd-din played them mostly with his courtiers (*harifan*).[28]

Convivial gatherings of the Sultans

Convivial gatherings at the court of Jalal-u'd-din Khalji have been very graphically described by Barani. His account throws interesting light on the royalty in medieval India. "Jalal-u'd-din's pleasure party (*majlis-i-'aish*)", he writes, "was adorned with such unrivalled companions (*harifs*)[29], incomparable courtiers (*nadims*), cypress-statured *saqis*, beautiful girls with silver-ears, and life-giving musicians as can only be seen in paradise . . . the sultan, laid aside all kingly pride in his drinking parties. He asked his companions to put aside their court-dress, take off their socks and sit comfortably in their cloaks. . . . He played *nard* and chess with some of his companions. . . . His companions (*harifs*) in the *majlis* were Malik Taj-u'd-din Kuchi, Malik Fakhr-u'd-din Kuchi . . .

every one of whom excelled in charm and wit, (and) drank wine with the sultan. Among the courtiers (*nadims*) ... were Taj-u'd-din 'Iraqi, Amir Khusrau. . . . There was no one like them in the knowledge of literature, letters, history and the procedure of royal court. . . . The *ghazal*-reciters of the *majlis* were Amir Khasa and Hamid Raja. . . . Every day Amir Khusrau brought new *ghazals* to the *majlis* and the sultan who was enamoured of Khusrau's *ghazals*, gave plenty of gifts. The *saqis* (who served wine) of the *majlis* were the sons of Haibat Khan, Nizam Kharitadar and of Yilduz, the chief *saqi*. They had such loveliness, beauty, grace and charm that any ascetic or devotee, who looked at their faces, would tie the Brahman's thread around his waist, make his prayer-carpet a mat for the tavern, put the liquor-pot over his head and dishonour and disgrace himself for the sake of those unrivalled repentance-breakers. . . . Among the musicians ... Muhammad Shah Changi played the harp (*chang*), while Futuha and the daughter of Fiqai and Nusrat Khatun sang and their enchanting voice brought the birds down from the air. . . . The dancers ... Nusrat Bibi and Mehr Afroz; owing to their extraordinary beauty and elegance, threw a charm in every direction they looked. . . . Every one, who saw them dancing and their amorous charm, desired to sacrifice himself for them and to keep on gazing at their feet. . . . In such *majlis* . . . the lifeless got their life again. Fairies (*paris*) and *houris* swept the floor (of the *majlis*)."[30]

Concluding his account Barani laments:

> "And now sixty years after their disappearance, I wish to shave my head and beard, and tearing my clothes with lamentations, I wish to go and give up my life at the feet of their graves."[31]

Coronation Ceremonies

One of the most important and pompous ceremonies at the court was the coronation of a sultan. Special pavilions were erected for the occasion; silken and satin (*atlas*) curtains were hung on every wall of the palace which was elegantly decorated. Most of the coronation ceremonies took place at Daulat Khanah of Delhi perhaps on account of some boon and blessing which had come to be associated with it.[32] Astrologers were consulted for fixing auspicious time for accession.[33] Thrones of gold[34], turqoise[35] or studded with pearls[36] specially made for the occasion were used. The people celebrated the event by decorating the streets with arches, curtains and carpets, and distributing sweets and drinks. The royal gesture on the occasion was scattering of gold and silver coins as *nisar-i-chatr*.

Qutb-u'd-din Aibek's accession was deferred till he had received a letter of manumission and a canopy of state from the heirs of Sultan Shihab-u'd-din of Ghur. As the accessions of Aibek and Iltutmish had taken place under tragic circumstances, there was little of fanfare. When Raziya came to power the problem of *purdah* was yet unresolved. At the time of her accession, ladies stood on one side of the curtain and nobles on the other.[37]

Jalal-u'd-din Khalji ascended the throne at Kilugarhi (June 13, 1290) where the palace of Kaiqubad was renovated and decorated with fine carvings and inscriptions. A grand darbar was arranged. Festivities were accompanied by grant of *iqta's* to princes and supporters of the *coup*. Titles and new posts were also conferred on them. When 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji came to the throne (October 20, 1296), he took up his residence at the *Kaushak-i-Lal* of Balban, and bestowed lavish gifts on the people. Pavilions were erected in the bazars, and drinks and betel leaves were distributed to the people. The soldiers were given six months' salary as a reward and huge sums were bestowed on the '*ulama* (scholars) and the *mashaikh* (saints).[38] Qutb-u'd-din Mubarak Khalji's accession (14 April 1316) was followed by great rejoicings. He set free large number of prisoners on this occasion and remitted many taxes.[39] He, however, committed one serious mistake on this occasion. He promoted many favourites and slaves to positions which they did not deserve. Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq's elevation to the throne was, according to Barani, based on *ijma-i khwas-o-awwam*[40], public consensus. His coronation took place at Kaushak-i-Siri. For about forty days there were public rejoicings.[41]

Muhammad bin Tughluq was crowned at Tughluqabad. He went to Delhi forty days after his accession, and ascended the throne of earlier kings in the old Daulat Khanah "as a token of good omen".[42] Barani gives the following details of his coronation ceremonies: "Before Sultan Muhammad entered the city they had constructed *qubbas* (cupolas), beaten the drums in joy and adorned the markets and lanes with painted and embroidered cloth. Sultan Muhammad had ordered that at the time when the sultan's *chatr* entered (the city) they were to shower gold in the lanes and mohallas of the city. . . . When the sultan entered the Badaun Gate and alighted at the Daulat Khanah, *amirs* and great men who were mounted on elephants and had basins full of gold and silver *tankahs* before them scattered handfuls in lanes and markets ... and on top of the roofs. Sight seers mounted the roofs to collect the coins. . . . Owing to the joy at the sultan's coming, the sound of the drum (*daf*) and

the *dholak* came out of every house. Men and women sang in every note and tone."[43]

Celebrations of Victory

Reports of successful military campaigns were received at the court with great enthusiasm and fanfare. When Kaiqubad succeeded against the Mongols, he celebrated his victory by organizing a music concert on a grand scale.[44] Normally wine was served freely on such occasions.[45] There was a custom in Delhi that whenever a sultan went out with his army or returned from a campaign, animals were sacrificed. Sayyid Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari declared all such sacrifices as *haram* (prohibited).[46] When Malik Kafur returned from his campaigns in the south, 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji held a durbar at Siri (October 18, 1311). Amir Khusrau thus describes the scene: "The exalted Sun (Sultan) held a public durbar in the Golden Palace. The 'Shadow of God' sat under the canopy, and the rays of his face drove away the evil eye, as if with a baton. The dormant fortunes of men awakened; it seemed that the black shadow of his canopy had lined their sleepy eyes with antimony. His baton struck its light on the head of blood-shedding Mars; his sword cast its scabbard-strap in the neck of the sun. The sky, for all its fearless tyranny, was overpowered by the lustre of the spears, and Time, in spite of its overbearing strength, felt afraid of the fearful bow. The *maliks* in innumerable rows rubbed their waists together like so many rubies and diamonds. White and brown horses stood in magnificent files, stamping the ground with their feet and turning it into gold. The earth seemed full of (small) hillocks after the great *maliks* had rubbed their foreheads upon it, while the prostration of *Tikadar Rais* gave it the colour of saffron. The cry of *Bismillah* came to the ears of the angels and reminded them of their bowing before Adam; the sound of *Hadakallah* fell on sultan's ears, compelling him to bow down to Adam's descendants. The wind of Imperial favour blew so generously as to take away the power of self-restraint from the wishes of men; yet such was the awe of His Imperial Majesty, that but for the anchor-loads on their backs, the elephants would have fled away. When the right and left wing of the Imperial Court had assembled, the sky recited the *Ayatal Kursi* and the four angels read the four *Quls* at the four columns. The emperor's servant, the *Sah-Kash*, who had performed more services than can be described was introduced along with other *maliks* and great men who had survived the campaign in which they had so often risked their lives. He bowed the broad forehead of his fortune before the throne and

placed his obedient face on the carpet of the court. The cry of *Bismillah* rose so high, that Divine favour descended down it from the sky as down a strong rope. Then the review of the sports began. The ground was covered by the large bodies of the elephants and faultless gems. While the jewels were on the backs of the animals, they indicated that the essence of things was finer than the eye; but when they were scattered at the feet of men and horses, it was proved that the eye was superior to the jewels. All men, who were adorned with two eyes, just as the eye is adorned with two jewels, wondered at the sight of elephants and jewels. Every gigantic elephant had a female, and the female also had a gigantic stature. The body of the elephant was strong and large; there was a great distance between its head and feet, and the distance between its trunk and tail was greater still; nor could you see the whole of its back and breast except in three views (from three different points). The forgiving Emperor thanked the merciful God."[47]

When the sultan himself returned after a victorious campaign, the festivities and rejoicings were organized on a much bigger scale. Balban distributed *nisar-e-chatr* all along the route, when he returned from Lakhnauti after crushing the rebellion of Tughril.[48] Delhi was tastefully decorated on this occasion and for two or three weeks, day and night the people celebrated the victory.[49] When Mubarak Khalji returned from Deogir, the entire city of Delhi was decorated and public rejoicings continued for several days.[50]

Festivities on the Occasion of Births

Birth of children in the *haram* were always an occasion for large scale festivities. Astrologers were asked to prepare horoscopes and make predictions about the future of the child.[51]

Marriage Ceremonies

Marriage ceremonies at the court were based on different traditions—Indian, Islamic, Iranian, etc. It appears from Amir Khusrau's account of the marriages of princes during the time of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji that many Indian customs were adopted by the royalty. The city was decorated and welcome arches were constructed to celebrate the wedding.[52]

Graphic description of the marriage of a sister of Muhammad bin Tughluq has been given by Ibn Battuta. When the sultan ordered the celebration of his sister's marriage with Amir Ghadda, he appointed Malik Fath-ul-lah in charge of arrangements for feast. Ibn Battuta was

ordered to remain in personal attendance of Amir Ghadda. Malik Fath-ul-lah set up *pandals* in the two courtyards of the Red Palace. The floors were covered with beautiful carpets. Shams-u'd-din of Tabriz, the head musician (*amir-ul-mutribin*), was entrusted with arrangements for music. All the female singers and dancers in his charge were those who were slaves of sultan. The cooks, confectioners, cup bearers, and betel-leaf holders were assigned work. Animals and birds were slaughtered in large numbers and there were public feasts for fifteen days. Two nights before actual marriage, ladies from the sultan's palace artistically decorated the mansion. They surrounded the bridegroom and installed him on a seat. To reduce his feelings of loneliness the sultan ordered his own stepmother (mother of his brother Mubarak Khan) to act as the *amir*'s mother. Other ladies were to act as his sister, aunt etc. The ladies applied *hinna* (*Lawsonia inermis*) to the hands and feet of the bridegroom. Ladies stood behind him singing and dancing. At the wedding palace, principal companions of Amir Ghadda remained with him. The sultan appointed two parties of *amirs*, one as members of Amir Ghadda's party, and the other as the bridal party. When the bridal party entered the gate they had to overpower the bride's party. In case they were unable to do so, they had to pay thousands of *dinars* to the bride's party.[53]

Festivals

Of the festivals celebrated at the court, *Nauruz*, the two '*Eids*, and the *Shab-i-Barat*, deserve particular mention.

Nauruz

Nauruz (or *Naugroz* as the Sassanids called it) was an ancient Persian festival.[54] Alberuni thus describes the general scheme of its celebration: "In these five days it was the custom of the *Kisras* (Persian kings) that the king opened the *Nauruz* and then proclaimed to all that he would hold a session for them, and bestow benefits upon them. On the second day the session was for men of high rank, and for the members of the great families. On the third day the session was for his warriors, and for the highest *Maubadhas* (priests). On the fourth day it was for his family, his relations and domestics and on the fifth day it was for his children and clients. When the sixth day came and he had done justice to all of them, he celebrated *Nauruz* for himself and conversed only with his special friends and those who were admitted into his privacy."[55] Balban introduced the festival in India. Almost all the succeeding sultans

celebrated it with great pomp and eclat. Amir Khusrau has given details of its celebration by Kaiqubad. Beautiful arches, curtains of *zarbaft* (gold embroidered), *chatrs* of five colours, artificial trees with birds on them, added to the charm and attraction of the celebrations.[56]

'Eids

The two *'Eids* were celebrated by the sultans with great pomp. Ibn Battuta thus describes the celebrations of *'Eid* at the court of Muhammad bin Tughluq: "The night preceding the *'Eid* the Sultan sends robes to the *amirs*, the courtiers, the notable personages, and the *a'izza* as well as to the secretaries, chamberlains, palace officers (*nuqaba*), military chiefs, slaves and news correspondents about exception. On the *'Eid* morning all the elephants are adorned with silk, gold and jewels. . . . In front of the royal elephant march the servants and slaves, each wearing a gold cap and gold belt studded in some cases with jewels. The chief justice, *Sadr-i-Jahan* Kamal-u'd-din of Ghazna, the chief justice, *Sadr-i-Jahan* Nasir-u'd-din Khwarazam, and other judges and distinguished personalities of Khurasan, Iraq, Syria, Egypt and the West are in attendance, each riding an elephant. The *mu'azzins* (public criers who assemble the people for prayers) too mount on elephants and they call out *Allah-o-Akbar*. . . . Behind the sultan are carried the royal flags, drums, trumpets, bugles, and hautboys ... great *amirs*, who never part company with the sultan, ride in his company on the day of *'Eid* with their respective insignia. . . . Other *amirs* ride without insignia. When the sultan alights (at the *'Eidgah*); the *imam* conducts the prayers and delivers the sermon. If it be the *'Eid-ul-Azha*, the sultan brings the camel which he slaughters with a lance (*rumh*) which they call *neza*, after having covered his clothes with a silk sheet to keep off the blood; and then he mounts an elephant and returns to his palace. On the day of *'Eid* the whole palace is hung with tapestry and magnificently decorated. Artificial trees made of silk of varying colours and covered with blossoms and flowers are arranged in three rows in the council-hall. . . . As soon as he ascends the throne, the chamberlains and the palace officers call out *Bismillah* with a loud voice. Then the people advance to salute him; first the judges, then the orators, then the *'ulama* then the sultan's brothers, his relations and brothers-in-law, then the *a'izza*, then the *vazirs*, then the military chiefs, then the senior slaves of advanced age and then the commanders of the troops. It is a custom on the day of *'Eid* for every one who possesses a village bestowed on him to bring some gold *dinars* wrapped in a piece of cloth on which his name is

written; this is put in a gold plate there. Enormous wealth is thus collected, and the sultan gives it away to whomsoever he likes. . . . Then dinner is served to all ... scent-burners burn the fragrant wood so that the perfume fills the whole chamber ... rose water is sprayed over the people profusely. This throne and the censer are taken out only on the occasion of the two '*Eids*. On the succeeding days the sultan sits on another gold throne. . . . The following day female singers sing and dance and the sultan gives them away to the chief slaves. And on the third day the sultan gets his relatives married, and gifts are made to them. And on the fourth day the male slaves are manumitted; on the fifth day the female slaves are manumitted and on the sixth day he makes the male slaves marry the female slaves. On the seventh day he gives away alms on a very large scale."[57]

Shab-i-Barat

The *Shab-i-Barat* was celebrated by some sultans with great enthusiasm. Balban kept awake all through the night.[58] Firuz Shah Tughluq celebrated the festival for four days. He used to collect crackers and fireworks much in advance. Four huge piles of these fireworks were reserved for him. For three nights continuously (from 13th to 15th Sha'ban) these fireworks were lighted. Some trays full of crackers were distributed among the people also. On the night of the 15th Sha'ban, gifts were distributed.[59] Some religious men of the period, however, criticised the use of crackers.[60]

References

1. Text edited by Amin Abd-ul-Magid Badwi, Tehran, 1956.
2. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, p. 85; *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, MS, 98 f.
3. Obviously, the uncooked food was for the Hindus.
4. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 54-55.
5. Ibid., pp. 599-600; for 'Ala-u'd-din flying *shikra*, *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 75.
6. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, pp. 110-11.
7. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, pp. 364-65.
8. Ibid., p. 365; tr., vol. II, p. 564.
9. Ibid., p. 365.
10. For details, see *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, MS, 68, 95, 106-7 ff.; 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 310-28. See also *Diwan-i-Mutahhar*, *Oriental College Magazine*, vol. XI, May 3, 1935, p. 131.
11. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 75.
12. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 600.
13. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 80.
14. Ibid., p. 316.

15. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, Eng. tr., pp. 75-76.
16. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 423.
17. *Rehla*, p. 135.
18. Ibid., pp. 135-37.
19. Amir Khusrau, *Hasht Bihisht*, p. 40.
20. Ibid., pp. 46-47; *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 120.
21. *A'in-i-Akbari*, pp. 173-74.
22. Raverty, I, p. 528.
23. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 105.
24. Barani, p. 128.
25. *Rehla*, p. 77.
26. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 162.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., p. 198.
29. *Harifs* were high officers; they have to be distinguished from the *nadims* (courtiers) whose status was lower.
30. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 198-200.
31. Ibid., p. 200.
32. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 456.
33. *Makhzan-i-Afghani*, MS, p. 80.
34. E.g. the throne of Rukn-u'd-din Firuz, *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 130.
35. E.g. the throne of Kaiqubad, *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 185.
36. E.g. the throne of 'Ala-u'd-din Bahman Shah, *Futuh-us-Salatin*, pp. 554-55.
37. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 133.
38. Barani, pp. 242-43; Ferishta, vol. I, pp. 101-02.
39. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, pp. 354-55.
40. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 423.
41. Ibid., p. 425.
42. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 456.
43. Ibid., pp. 456-57.
44. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, pp. 66-67.
45. See *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 237 (for 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji); pp. 140ff. (for Mu'izz-u'd-din).
46. *Siraj-ul-Hidayah*, MS, 20b, 21af.
47. *Khaza'in-ul-Futuh*, Eng. tr., pp. 108-09.
48. Barani, p. 108.
49. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 171.
50. Ibid., p. 324.
51. Ibid., (p. 151) for celebrations on the birth of a prince.
52. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 79; See *Futuh-us-Salatin* (p. 324) for rejoicings on the marriage of Khizr Khan.
53. *Rehla*, pp. 78-80.
54. *L'Iran Sons Les Sassanids*, A. Christensen (Urdu translation by M. Iqbal), pp. 225-26.
55. As cited in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. V, p. 872.
56. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, pp. 74-86.
57. *Rehla*, pp. 60-63.
58. *Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad*, pp. 231-32.
59. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 365-67.
60. *Siraj-ul-Hidaya*, MS, 76af.

CHAPTER 8

The Haram

The *haram* of the medieval sultans comprised the mother of the sultan (called *Sultan Valide* by the Turks), his chief queen, his wives, sisters and daughters, concubines and slave-girls. Those legally wedded were few; the number of others was often very large. The medieval historians have used two very significant phrases—*dar nikah awurd* (brought into the legal wedlock) and *dar haram awurd* (admitted to the *haram*)—in order to indicate the manner in which particular women were admitted into the seraglio. But maintaining a large *haram* was always a problem, for personal jealousies and intrigues often disturbed the atmosphere. Few rulers could adopt the harsh methods adopted by Sultan Mahmud of Gujarat who was so strict in maintaining peaceful atmosphere in the seraglio which had a large number of beautiful ladies,[1] that if any lady laughed at or derided the other, both were killed.[2]

The first very outstanding lady of the Turkish seraglio in India was a wife of Iltutmish. Mother of Sultan Rukn-u'd-din Firuz, Khudawand-i-Jahan Shah Turkan, had a reputation for her charities and her lavish gifts to the '*ulama*, Sayyids and the pious people, but when she obtained control over the affairs of the state, she started a reign of terror, maltreated other ladies of Iltutmish's *haram* and destroyed several of them. When a son of Iltutmish, Qutb-u'd-din, who was a youth of great promise, was blinded and put to death at the order of Firuz and his mother, the *maliks* began to distrust the government and rebellions broke out in different parts of the country.[3] Her ill treatment of other ladies of the *haram* created a serious situation and drove Raziya to the extreme step of invoking the help of the people of Delhi, who had assembled for congregational prayers, in getting rid of Firuz and Turkan Khatun.[4] It was for the first time in the history of the Delhi Sultanate that congregational crowd got directly involved in a *coup d'etat*.

An interesting aspect of *haram* life of the Delhi sultans was that despite dynastic variations, there was a matrimonial relationship of every sultan with his predecessor's family. One of the daughters of

Aibek was married to Iltutmish; a daughter of Iltutmish was married to Balban; a daughter of Malik Chajju was married to Kaiqubad[5]; a daughter of Kaiqubad was married to 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji; a daughter of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji was married to Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq; a daughter of Mubarak Khalji was married to Firuz Shah Tughluq and a daughter of Sultan Muhammad of the Sayyid dynasty was married to Mahmud Sharqi.

Matrimonial relations of the sultans with women they married before accession did not always remain cordial. 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji's marriage with the daughter of Sultan Jalal-u'd-din Khalji was a source of constant annoyance to him. Her arrogant behaviour so disgusted him that he often said in despair: "a beggar's son is better than the son-in-law of a king." Time and again he thought of doing away with her but anticipating the consequences of such a step, kept quiet.

It is said that Prince 'Ala-u'd-din had two wives: one, a daughter of Sultan Jalal-u'd-din Khalji and the other a sister of Alp Khan, called Mahru. Jalal-u'd-din's daughter had no knowledge about the other marriage but when she came to know about it, she began to ferret out their private life. One day 'Ala-u'd-din was sitting with Mahru in a garden when she suddenly appeared and enraged at the sight began to beat Mahru with her shoe. 'Ala-u'd-din became furious and attacked her with his sword. She, however, escaped with a few minor injuries.[6]

The position of 'Ala-u'd-din's *haram* is not known but he had several wives—Jalal-u'd-din's daughter, a sister of Alp Khan, Badshah Begum, a daughter of Kaiqubad, known as Malka Mahik, and mother of Mubarak, Kamla Devi the daughter of Ram Deva. However, Professor K.S. Lal has rightly remarked that the sultan "does not seem to have been under feminine influence as such."[7]

Notwithstanding all this 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji's *haram* became the centre of two very interesting romantic episodes.

1. Malika Jahan arranged Khizr Khan's marriage with the daughter of her brother Alp Khan. This was against the wishes of the prince[8] who was infatuated with Dewal Rani, daughter of Rai Karan of Gujarat, who had been living in the *haram* for some time. Khizr Khan was so deeply in love with her that he approached Amir Khusrau to versify the details of his romance. The *Dewal Rani Khizr Khan* is the result of that request. It throws invaluable light on the life and conditions of royalty during the medieval period. The education and training of the princes, their involvement in palace intrigues, their private life and fratricidal conflicts are presented in this *masnavi*.[9]

2. Nainsi[10] says that a princess of 'Ala-u'd-din's *haram* had fallen in love with Vikram, son of Kanher Deva. Padmanabh[11] says that her name was Firozah and that she was a daughter of 'Ala-u'd-din. The sultan and the ladies of the *haram* decided to give the daughter in marriage to Vikram who did not want to marry a Turk girl and left for Jalor under the pretext of bringing a wedding party.[12]

The authenticity of the Nainsi story has not been established. It seems more as a rejoinder to Amir Khusrau's *Dewal Rani Khizr Khan* than an authentic record of the romantic developments at the court of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji.

Anxious to consolidate her position Mahru arranged the marriage of her second son Shadi Khan also with the second daughter of her brother Alp Khan at a time (1313-14) when 'Ala-u'd-din was not feeling well and did not like marriage festivities. However, Mahru and perhaps 'Ala-u'd-din also gave his consent to Khizr Khan's marriage with Dewal Devi. It was also performed simultaneously with the marriage of Shadi Khan.

Mubarak Khalji, though awfully homosexual, was very particular about his *haram* which used to accompany him on campaigns as well as hunting expeditions.[13] 'Isami says: "The daughters of the sultans[14] of India, each a cherisher of the soul and agreeable to the heart, many smart riding sweethearts every one being a hunter of the soul in the field of love—all walked blandishingly to the emperor's left and right, rear and front."[15]

The *haram* life of the Tughluq sultans was characterized by sobriety, dignity and restraint. Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq's personal life was extremely chaste and pure.[16] His *haram* was perhaps very restricted and small. Our knowledge about Muhammad bin Tughluq's *haram* life is almost nil. According to Ibn Hajar Asqulani and Salah-u'd-din Safadi he had become impotent as the result of an operation.[17] However he looked after his mother, sisters and others with great personal concern. The way he arranged the marriages of his sisters and the personal interest that he took in their well-being shows his strong family sentiments. But his sense of discipline was such that even his sisters were afraid of him. Ibn Battuta has reported that his brother-in-law, Amir Ghadda, was once convicted for an offence and was imprisoned. His sister could not send bedding to her husband because she was afraid of the sultan and anticipated dire consequences of such an action.[18]

The queen-mothers were generally held in great respect. Muhammad bin Tughluq was always deeply respectful towards his mother,

Makhduma-i-Jahan.[19] Once she travelled with him. The sultan proceeded ahead to receive her and got down from his horse and kissed her feet publicly in view of all.[20] Makhduma-i-Jahan welcomed and entertained large number of visitors. She used to send young waiters to receive foreigners.[21] When Ibn Battuta arrived in Delhi, he paid a visit to the royal palace. Muhammad bin Tughluq was away at that time. Makhduma-i-Jahan entertained him to a sumptuous feast. The food, which was served in gold utensils was laid on two dinner carpets, each having two rows of visitors. The chamberlain called *Bismillah* whereupon they started eating. After Ibn Battuta and his party had taken their food, Makhduma-i-Jahan sent for them silken and cotton cloth. Then dry fruits, rose-water and betel-leaves were served in gold trays. Subsequently she allotted a horse to Ibn Battuta.[22]

Ibn Battuta has informed us that the Makhduma-i-Jahan was blind at that time. The reason of blindness was stated to be that when her son ascended the throne all the ladies of *maliks* and *amirs* and their daughters dressed in their best clothes, came to pay their respects and offer felicitations to her. She was seated on a gold throne studded with jewels. Visitors came near her and bowed. All of a sudden she lost her eyesight.[23]

Firuz Shah's two marriages have been mentioned by chroniclers. His first marraige with a girl of the Tank[24] family has a romantic background. He fell in love with a Tank girl during a hunting excursion, at Thaneswar. Sadhu and Saharan, brothers of the girl, entered the service of Firuz and subseqently embraced Islam. Saharan got the title of *Wajahat-ul-Mulk*.[25] Firuz's second wife was a daughter of Mubarak Khalji.[26]

Ladies of the *haram* seem very active in political life of the fifteenth century. Bibi Matto, widow of Sultan Shah Lodi (uncle of Bahlul Lodi) once defended the Delhi fort against the armies of Sultan Mahmud Sharqi by a strange strategem. She got Afghan women dressed in men's uniform and posted them on the parapet, thus deceiving the besiegers by a false show of numbers. The role of *haram* in Delhi-Jaunpur relations cannot be ignored in any assessment of political life of the period. In 1437 when Ibrahim Sharqi marched against Muhammad Shah of Delhi, the later sued for peace and gave his daughter Bibi Raji in marriage to Ibrahim's son Mahmud. When Mahmud ascended the throne Bibi Raji played a very important role in political developments. The Battle of Narela in 856/1462 was instigated by her. She told her husband that if he did not lead an army against Delhi, she would herself

tie quivers to her waist and march at the head of an army.[27] In the battle Qutb Khan Lodi, brother-in-law of Bahlul, was taken prisoner. Bahlul's wife Shams Khatun sent a message to her husband that so long as Qutb Khan, her brother, was not taken out of prison, "rest and sleep was unlawful for the sultan."[28]

The *haram* was very closely guarded and a separate establishment consisting of slave-girls and eunuchs maintained liaison between the 'inner' and the 'outer' world. When the sultan proceeded on some campaign he assigned the *haram* to the care of some of the most-reliable nobles. When 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji went out to meet a Mongol invasion, he entrusted his *haram* and treasures to the care of 'Ala-ul-Mulk, the *kotwal* of Delhi and ordered him "to hand over the keys (of the *haram* and the treasuries) to whoever was victorious."[29] In a large *haram* comprising women of different backgrounds, cases of erratic behaviour could not be totally ruled out. A stepmother of Muhammad bin Tughluq, daughter of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji, was stoned to death by the sultan on charge of adultery.[30]

It appears that the sultans did not ignore the education of the ladies of the *haram*. Raziyah, a Turkan Khatun, a Makhduma-i-Jahan, a Bibi Matto, a Bibi Raji, or a Shams Khatun could emerge in an atmosphere in which the training of the princesses was not neglected. It is difficult to determine the size of the *haram* of the Delhi sultans. Balban's admonishment to his sons to have restricted *haram* shows that its size was not negligible. No sultan of Delhi or even the Mughal emperor[31] could have a *haram* as large as that of Sultan Ghiyas-u'd-din of Malwa. He is reported to have collected sixteen thousand damsels in his *haram*.[32] The fate of the ladies of the Mughal *haram* after 1857 has been described by the famous Urdu poet Ghalib in a letter. It is not improbable that every change of dynasty during the Sultanate period brought misfortune to the *haram* of the displaced dynasty.

References

1. *Mir'at-i-Sikandari*, p. 152.
2. Ibid., p. 293.
3. Minhaj, p. 183.
4. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 54; *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 132.
5. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, I, p. 158.
6. Haji al-Dabir, *Zafar-ul-Walih*, ed. D. Ross, p. 154.
7. *History of the Khaljis*, p. 273.

8. 'Isami has very powerfully described the feelings of the prince, his almost abnormal reactions, on the night of this marriage which he deemed a betrayal to Deval Devi. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, pp. 322-33.
9. *Duwal Rani Khazir Khan*, edited by K.A. Nizami, Delhi, 1988.
10. *Mohnot Nainsi ki Khayat*, 2 vols., Kashi, 1982 Sam.
11. *Kanhad de Prabandh* is a Gujarati epic romance, ed. by G.B. Vyas, Jaipur, 1953.
12. See Lal, *History of the Khaljis*, p. 117.
13. 'Isami, *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 365.
14. Dr. Mahdi Husain's remark in the footnote (p. 564) that the word *salatin* is used here in a general sense meaning chiefs is not very convincing. The possibility of many princesses of the displaced dynasty entering the *haram* of Mubarak cannot be ruled out.
15. Ibid., p. 365, tr., vol. II, p. 564.
16. Barani, p. 443.
17. *Al-Durar al-Kaminah,* vol. III, pp. 460-61; *Kitab al-Wafi bil-Wafayat,* vol. III, p. 172.
18. *Rehla*, p. 118.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid., p. 81.
21. Ibid., p. 14.
22. Ibid., p. 121.
23. Ibid., p. 118.
24. Tanks are low caste Hindus included among carpenters, tailors and even sweepers. See W. Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the North Western Provinces and Oudh,* vol. I, pp. 191-92, 271 ff. S.C. Misra, *Rise of Muslim Power in Gujarat*, pp. 137-39.
25. *Mir'at-i-Sikandari*, pp. 5-8.
26. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 437.
27. 'Abd-ul-lah, *Tarikh-i-Da'udi*, MS.
28. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, vol. I, p. 304.
29. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 258.
30. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, pp. 136-37.
31. Professor K.S. Lal's *The Mughal Harem*, makes an exhaustive survey of Mughal conjugal life.
32. Nizam-u'd-din, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, vol. III, p. 351.

Chapter 9

The Court

Every sultan of Delhi saw to it that his court was so magnificently organized that it not only impressed the people by its grandeur and glory but also inspired awe and terror in their hearts. It was not open to all; only the chosen few could have the privilege of watching the pageant of glory from close quarters. In some cases public complaints were personally heard by the sultans in special sessions of the open darbar, but generally it was crying for the moon to long for a direct view of the sultan.[1]

No medieval Indian ruler laid greater emphasis on court decorum and etiquette than Balban who had meticulously organised every detail of court life in the light of Sassanid traditions. In fact, it was Balban who laid down the basic principles on which court life was to be organized. In varying degrees and according to limitation of resourcs, all the sultans of Delhi followed his traditions, not only in glory and magnificence but in etiquette, decorum, seats and positions assigned, dress and duties of the court staff and the slogan raised as one moved to the central forum.

Sultan Sanjar and Sultan Muhammad Khwarazam Shah[2] were Balban's ideals in grandeur and glory of the court and he tried to emulate them as best as he could in the Indian environment. If the pageant of Sanjar's court had, at one time, made even the great Imam Ghazzali nervous,[3] emissaries from foreign courts, princes and *muqaddams* trembled and fell down on the ground in the darbar of Balban.[4]

Barani writes:

> "With his face shining like the sun and his beard bright as camphor, Balban sat on the throne with such awe-inspiring dignity that the hearts of people began to tremble.... The noise made by the army officers (*sahmul hashman*), heralds and criers (*naqibs*) was so great that it could be heard at a distance of two *karohs*...."[5]

Balban remained seated on the throne between the '*Asr* (pre-sunset) and *Maghrib* (post-sunset) prayers. The presents of *khans*, *maliks*, *wazirs* and *amirs* were presented at this time. If the person offering the present

was a man of high status *fasl-i-mushabba* (a citation summarizing his services) was read.[6] *Hajibs*, *silahdars*, *jandars*, *chaoosh*, *naqibs* etc. stood before him in solemn silence. Only a few trusted *maliks* and confidants sat behind the throne; all others kept standing in order of their rank and position. Every inch a king, Balban set the atmosphere of the court by his own behaviour. There was always a serious and grim look on his face and nobody ever saw him laughing or talking in lighter vein. Storms of personal grief came in his life with unexpected fury and, though they killed the man in him, they could not disturb the routine of the sultan.

The sultan generally held two types of meetings, public and private. Muhammad bin Tughluq used to hold a general meeting (*julus-i'-'amm*) on Tuesday in a very spacious courtyard in which a big canopy was set up. He sat in the centre of this canopy on a high throne plated with gold and embellished with gems. The Ministers of State (*arbab-ud-daula*) stood around him on the right and left and behind him stood the *silahdars* (armour-bearers), *jandars* and the *arbab-ul-wazaif* and the government officers. Only the *khans*, the *Sadr-i-Jahan* and the *dabirs* were permitted to sit. All others had to keep standing. The chamberlains loudly pronounced all the time: "Any one who has any grievance or any need should come forward." Those with complaints to make and those with any needs to place came forward and stood before him. They were not interrupted or removed till their case was finally disposed off.[7] Nobody could enter the palace with weapons, not even with a small knife. Everyone who came to the palace was examined before he was allowed to enter the gate. The palace had seven doors, one after the other. At the outer door a man used to sit with a trumpet. When a *khan* or *malik* or a great *amir* came, he blew the horn intimating to the sultan that a great man had arrived so that he could be alert and well prepared. These people dismounted at the first outer door and walked on foot till they entered the seventh door. Certain exceptional persons were honoured by the permission to pass riding on horseback up to the sixth door. But in such cases, the horn was continually blown till the visitors were assembled. When all had come, they were allowed to enter. The judges, *wazirs* and *dabirs* sat in a place where the eye of the sultan did not fall upon them. The table-cloths were spread and the chamberlains brought the petitions. Each class of people had a chamberlain who presented their cases. The chamberlains brought the cases to the chief chamberlain, the *Hajib-i-Khass*, who was superior to all of them, and presented the cases to the sultan. When the sultan left the court, the

chief chamberlain sat with the private secretary and made over to him the petitions along with the sultan's orders.[8]

Ibn Battuta has described in some detail the court etiquette. According to him, the public audience was generally held in the afternoon, though sometimes it was held in the forenoon also. The sultan sat on a throne over a dais draped in white cloth. His posture was like that of a man sitting in prayers. The *wazir* stood facing him and the secretaries stood with Firuz, the head chamberlain (*kabir-ul-hujjab*). The special chamberlain (*khass hajib*) and the house superintendent (*wakil-ud-dar*) with their respective deputies followed him. Then came the high chamberlain (*sharaf-ul-hujjab*) with his staff. The chamberlains were followed by the *naqibs* numbering about one hundred. As the sultan took his seat the chamberlains and palace officers loudly proclaimed *Bismillah*. Behind the sultan stood Malik Qubula holding in his hand a fly-flap. Hundred armed soldiers stood on either side of the sultan holding shields, swords and bows. The chief justice (*qazi-ul-quzat*), the head orator (*khatib-ul-khutaba*), *qazis*, *fuqaha* (jurists), Sayyids and *mashaikh*, the sultan's brothers and brothers-in-law, the great *amirs*, the distinguished visitors (*a'izza*)—all stood in the council hall. Sixty horses fully equipped with saddles, bridles and royal trappings, were then brought. Some of these horses bore the insignia of the *khilafat*. The bridles and girths of some of them were of black silk woven with gold; others were ornamented with white silk embroidered with gold. Then fifty elephants caparisoned with silk cloth and gold cloth were brought. These elephants were trained to salute the sultan by bending their heads. When they bowed the chamberlains called out loudly *Bismillah*. The sultan's slaves with shields and swords in their hands stood behind all the people. No one could make his way through them.[9]

It appears that visitors to the court had to wear some prescribed uniform: socks, hairnet, white sashes, brocade robes, belts and caps of fur or wool. There were some additions or variations according to status and position.

Announcements

When a visitor approached the chamberlain's place, they called out: *Bismillah*. "The chorus of their sound," remarks Ibn Battuta, "was as high as the reputation of the visitor". When a Hindu visitor came, they cried out *Hadak Allah* (May God guide you).

Admission of Foreigners and their Presents at Court

When a person called at the royal palace with a present, the *amir*

hajib, the *khass hajib*, the *wakil-i-dar*, the *sayyid-ul-hujjab* and the *sharaf-ul-hujjab* announced it to the sultan. If the sultan ordered them to admit the visitor, they placed the present which he had brought, on his hands so that the audience and the sultan could see it. If he was a great man, he took his stand in the row of *amir hajib*; otherwise he stood behind him. The sultan welcomed the visitors warmly. Sometimes he shook hands or even embraced a visitor. If the presents were in the nature of arms and clothes, the sultan turned them up with his hand and expressed his appreciation. Then the sultan granted him a robe as well as cash for his shampoo according to the prevalent custom.[10]

Private Majlis

The duty of making arrangements for private *majlis* was assigned to an officer known as *amir-i-majlis*.[11] In these meetings gathered together men of talent in different walks of life—'*ulama*, poets, musicians, conversationalists etc. The author of *Masalik-ul-Absar* writes about Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq: "When the sultan goes from the *majlis* he sits in a private audience and he invites the '*ulama*, and there are present those whose custom it is (to be present). Then he sits with them, is friendly with them, and eats and talks and they are his confidants. Then he orders them to go and he is alone with the courtiers and singers: sometimes they relate stories, sometimes they sing to him, but in every case, in these public gatherings and in privacy he is exceedingly chaste and pure. He controls himself in action and in repose, and fears God in secret and in public; he does not commit a prohibited thing and does not yield to it."[12]

Once Muhammad bin Tughluq sent for Ibn Battuta. The sultan was in his private chamber with some of his favourites and two *jogis*. The sultan ordered him to sit, and then said to the *jogis*: "Verily this illustrious man (*'aziz*) has come from a distant country; show him what he has not seen". One of them, then, squatted and lifted himself high up in the air in such a way that he remained there in a squatting posture. His comrade took a slipper from the bag and struck it on the ground as if he were in a fury. The slipper rose and hovered over the squatted man's neck which it began to strike. He then descended gradually. The Sultan told Ibn Battuta that lest he might lose his mental equilibrium, he did not order *jogis* to show other bewildering things. Ibn Battuta fell ill at this sight. The sultan prescribed a tonic for him.[13]

It is said that Firuz Shah had three palaces for audience: (i) *Mahal Sahn-i-Gilin* (also called *Mahal Daka* i.e. Grape Palace); (ii) *Mahal*

Chachchaha Chobin; (iii) *Mahal Bar-i-'Am* (also called *Shan-i-Miangi*).[14] High dignitaries of the court, *amirs* and *maliks*, '*ulama* and scholars wearing special head gear used to assemble in the courtyard on the Gilin Palace. They were escorted to the royal presence according to their order of precedence. The second palace was meant for very special and prominent persons. The third one was for public audience. After settling in Firuzabad, it became the practice of Firuz Shah to sit in Barja Palace after prayers and recite there of the *Qur'an* after every interval of two or three days.[15]

Perhaps no sultan maintained such a simple and austere a court as Bahlul Lodi. Even when presiding at state functions, he did not sit on a throne, not even on a raised platform. His successor Sikandar Lodi, though not austere like him, also did not strongly advocate the conventions of royalty and allowed the nobles to sit in his presence.[16] Balban and Bahlul stand on two extreme poles so far as court life of the sultans was concerned.

References

1. Amir Khusrau says:
   Gharaz-i wara-i imkan chi khyal-i fasid ast in
   Hawas-i jamal-i sultan ba dil-i gada nashasta.
   —*Diwan-i-Amir Khusrau*, p. 406
   (An unrealizable and flippant desire to have a glimpse of the sultan has taken roots in the heart of a pauper.)
2. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 32.
3. Shibli, *Al-Ghazzali*, p. 32.
4. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 30-31.
5. Ibid., p. 30.
6. Ibid., p. 32.
7. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, Eng. tr., p. 73; *Masalik-ul-Absar*, Eng. tr., p. 49.
8. *Masalik-ul-Absar*, Eng. tr., pp. 49-52.
9. *Rehla*, pp. 58-59.
10. Ibid., p. 59.
11. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, p. 238; Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 174.
12. *Masalik-ul-Absar*, pp. 49-52; see also *Subh-ul-A'sha*, p. 74.
13. *Rehla*, pp. 165-66.
14. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 277.
15. Ibid., p. 278.
16. For details, A. Halim, *History of the Lodis of Delhi and Agra*, pp. 53-113.

Chapter 10

Royal Dinners and Processions

Royal dinners, banquets and processions were elaborately arranged as a symbol of royal prestige. The entire paraphernalia of royalty—*chatr, durbash, 'alam* etc.—was taken along when a ruler stepped out of the palace.[1]

Generally there were two types of dinners—private and public. Ibn Battuta has given complete picture of royal dinners. He writes: "It is the sultan's habit to eat along with those who are present and those whom he calls for the purpose, such as the special *amirs*—the head chamberlain (*amir hajib*), the sultan's paternal cousin, 'Imad-ul-Mulk Sartez and the master of ceremonies (*amir-i-majlis*)—and those out of the *a'izza* and great *amirs* whom he wants to honour and revere. Occasionally, when he is inclined to honour any one from among those present, he takes a plate, puts a bread on it and gives it to him.[2] The latter receives it; and placing the plate on his left hand he bows with his right hand touching the ground. Sometimes the sultan sends something from that meal to one absent from it, and the latter too, bows like the one present and sits down to eat it along with those that be in his company. I attended this special dinner several times; and I noticed that the persons present at this dinner were about twenty in number. But the public dinners are brought from the kitchen led by the palace officers, who call out *Bismillah*; and they are headed by the chief palace officer. He holds in his hand a gold mace and is accompanied by his deputy who carries a silver mace. As soon as they enter the *fourth* gate and those in the council hall hear the call, all stand up; and none remains seated, the sultan alone excepted. When the dishes are served on the floor, the palace officers stand up in rows, their chief standing right in their front. He makes a discourse in which he praises the sultan and eulogizes him; then he bows to him and so do his subordinate *naqibs* and in the same manner bow all those present in the council-hall whether big or small. Their custom is that anyone who hears the utterance of the Chief palace officer (*naqib-un-nuqaba*) stops instantly, if walking; and remains in his place if he happens to be standing and none can move or budge from his

place until the said discourse is over. Then his deputy too makes a similar discourse and he bows; and so do the palace officers and all the people a second time. Then all the people take their seats; and the gate secretaries hand over a report to a boy from among the *malik*'s sons appointed for this purpose and he takes the message to the sultan who, on reading it, appoints whomsoever he likes from among the great *amirs* to supervise the seating and feeding of the people."[3] The menu of the dinners was: bread, roasted meat, round pieces of bread split and filled with sweet paste, rice, chicken and *samosa*. The judges, jurists, Saiyyids and *mashaikh* sit at the head of the dinner-carpet; and then come the Sultan's relatives, the great *amirs* and the rest of the people. No one sits except at his appointed place. When all were seated, the cup-bearers (*shurbdariya*) served the drink in gold, silver, copper and glass vessels filled with refined sugar dissolved in water, which it was the custom to drink before the dinner. The chamberlains cried out *Bismillah* when people began to eat. Every one had before him a set of all the various dishes constituting the dinner which he ate exclusively. Then, trays full of betel leaves and spices were brought. Every one was served with a pinch of pounded spices as well as with fifteen betel-leaves put together and tied with a red silk thread. The chamberlains then called out *Bismillah* and the whole gathering stood up. The *amir* supervising the feast bowed; so did the others and left. Such dinners were held twice a day—one in the forenoon and the other in the afternoon.[4]

When meal was served at the court of Bahlul Lodi, all the guards from the gate were withdrawn, so that any stranger could enter and partake of the food.[5]

The practice at the court of Sultan Sikandar Lodi was different from all other sultans. He invited the '*ulama* and the nobles to dinner, but while he himself went on eating, those present were not permitted to touch the dishes served before them. They carried home their share of the royal meal.[6]

Details of a feast, arranged with the permission of Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji, by Khizr Khan and Shadi Khan in honour of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya are found in an early record. The feast was arranged at an open space in Ghiyaspur. It was a big feast for which preparations were made for seven nights and days, and distinguished nobles and *maliks* were deputed by the sultan to make arrangements and serve food. The princes were directed by the sultan to circulate the ewer (*tasht*) and the wash-basin (*aftaba*) themselves and personally serve *sherbet* and betel-leaves. Purses containing gold and silver coins were

put before the guests by the princes. It appears that besides Khizr Khan and Shadi Khan, other princes also, four or five in number, were present there. The Shaikh came to the feast. The feast being over, *sama'* (music) was arranged. the Shaikh left the function at the time of the mid-day prayer.[7]

Royal processions provided an opportunity for public display of royal pomp and splendour. When Balban rode out in procession, Seistani soldiers accompanied him with unsheathed swords. The shouts of *Bismillah, Bismillah*, rent the atmosphere as the royal cavalcade moved on. This display of power, authority and dignity which was inseparably associated with his theory of kingship, made the most recalcitrant elements in the country submissive and mesmerised the people with awe and terror![8]

The processions of Muhammad bin Tughluq were headed by elephants. Standards and parasols were attached to them. One of the parasols was over the sultan's head and before him was carried the *ghashiah*, a saddle-cover studded with gold and precious stones. When the sultan approached the town, *dinars* and *dirhams* were scattered by means of ballistas. This continued till the sultan had entered the palace. Thousands of people walked in front of him, and wooden cupolas were constructed and covered with silk cloth in which sat the female singers.[9]

"As regards his procession", writes Shihab-u'd-din al-'Umari about Muhammad bin Tughluq, "he rides from his palaces with a *chatr* over his head and a body of guards with weapons in their hands behind him and about twelve thousand slaves around him. Among them there are no riders except the bearers of garments, when he is outside his palace. Over his head are held black banners, which have an enormous snake of gold in the centre. No body carries black banners, except for him alone. On the left side he has red banners, with two gold snakes. His band, which is played on whether he is in station or in camp, is like that of Alexander; it has two hundred loaded drums, forty loaded kettle drums, twenty trumpets and ten brass castanets."[10] Again, if he moved from one place to another for the sake of diversion or recreation, he kept with him about three thousand horsemen and one thousand saddled and bridled horses which were caparisoned with covers interwoven with gold and had necklaces in which gems and diamonds were set.[11]

It is said about Sultan Firuz Shah that when he went out, he took an army with him. All the *khans* and governors, as well as the princes, walked along with him. Two spears made of peacock feathers were carried on the right hand side of the sultan. This was Muhammad bin

Tughluq's special custom. On the left hand side was sultan's special detachment. Birds were carried on the left side and quadrupeds on the right.[12]

Grand ovation awaited the sultans on their return from successful military expeditions. The population of Delhi came out with small flags when he returned to the capital.

"When the emperor returns from his journeys", writes Ibn Battuta, "elephants are decked out; and each of the sixteen royal elephants bears a parasol which in some cases is brocaded with gold and in other studded with jewels; and before him is carried the *ghashiah*, that is the saddle-cover bejewelled with the most precious stones. And wooden pavilions of several storeys are constructed and are covered with silk. In each of these storeys sit the girl singers clad in the finest robes and adorned with the finest ornaments; and some of these girls are dancers. In the centre of each pavilion is a big reservoir made of leather filled with *sherbet* perfumed with rose-water which all persons—be they travellers, natives or foreigners—drink. And every one who drinks from it is given a betel-leaf and spices. The space between the pavilions is covered with silk cloth over which passes the sultan's elephant. And the walls by the streets right from the city gate down to the royal palace are draped in silk. And in front of the sultan march the infantry from among his slaves—and they are in thousands—and behind him follow the regiments and armies. Some three or four small ballistas were placed on the elephants from which *dinars* and *dirhams* were thrown to the people (*an-nas*) around; and they picked them up from the time of his entrance into the city to that of his arrival at the palace."[13]

When Firuz Shah started for Jajnagar, some astrologers circulated the rumour that the sultan would not return alive from his expedition. When Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh came to know about this, he sent a message to Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul to tell the sultan to put four *maunds* of baked bread under his bed every night and distribute it to the needy and the poor the next morning.[14] This was suggested to ward off evil influences.

References

1. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 108; *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, pp. 50-51, 78, 89; *I'jaz-i-Khusrawi*, vol. I, p. 34.
2. Once when the sultan invited some saints to dinner he gave pieces of meat to Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh and Shaikh Fakhr-u'd-din Zarradi. *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, pp. 271-73. See also Nizami, *The Life and Times of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh*, pp. 68-9.

3. *Rehla*, pp. 64-65.
4. Ibid., pp. 64-66.
5. *Tarikh-i-Da'udi*, MS.
6. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, MS; *Tarikh-i-Da'udi*, MS.
7. *Qiwam-ul-'Aqa'id*, MS, pp. 185-86.
8. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 28, 31, 35.
9. *Rehla*, p. 127.
10. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, Eng. tr., pp. 75-76.
11. Ibid., pp. 74-75.
12. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 317-18.
13. *Rehla*, p. 64.
14. *Jawami'-ul-Kalim*, p. 21.

CHAPTER 11

Literary Interests and Activities of the Sultans

The early Turkish sultans of Delhi belonged to tribes and ethnic groups which did not have well-established traditions of education or scholarship. In fact, some of these tribes were newly converted to Islam and had little knowledge about the religion and its basic ideals and principles. However, as years rolled on and the Ghuzz and Mongol invasions threw large number of scholars of 'Ajam into India, academic centres developed very rapidly and the sultans also came to cultivate literary interests.

Aibek was purchased in his childhood as a slave by the *qazi* of Nishapur, Fakhr-u'd-din 'Abd-ul-'Aziz Kufi, a descendant of Imam Abu Hanifa. He provided the same facilities of education to Aibek which he had arranged for his sons.[1] Aibek learnt to recite the *Qur'an* in clear intonations and earned the epithet of *Qur'an Khwan*.[2] His interest in learning after his accession and his patronage of the '*ulama*, jurists, *qazis*, pious men and the reformers have been praised by the historians.[3] He raised the prestige of Lahore as a centre of Islamic learning and culture.[4] Of the '*ulama* who enjoyed his benefaction, the names of Qazi Hamid-u'd-din Iftikhar 'Ali b. 'Umar al-Mahmudi, Fakhr-i-Mudabbir, Sadr-u'd-din Hasan Nizami and Maulana Baha-u'd-din Ushi are particularly noteworthy. Qazi Hamid-u'd-din Iftikhar was known widely in Islamic lands for his erudition and learning.[5] Fakhr-i-Mudabbir's father Maulana Abul Hasan Mansur had been the teacher of large number of scholars of Lahore and Ghaznin.[6] Maulana Baha-u'd-din was a distinguished scholar from Ush.[7] As a result of Aibek's academic interests and his patronage of the learned, Delhi attained such academic eminence that "out of its ten (residents) nine were scholars and out of ten scholars, nine were experts in Quranic exigesis".[8]

Iltutmish's literary interests and his patronage of the '*ulama* and *mashaikh* have been acclaimed by all chroniclers, contemporary and later. Minhaj calls him '*alim parwar* (patron of scholars)[9] and lauds his excellence of character and academic aptitude. He used to hold academic discussions and sermon meetings in his court thrice a week.[10] Balban

used to say that his court had such a brilliant constellation of celebrities, the like of which could not be seen anywhere else.[11] Delegations of '*ulama* came to him to place their points of view about different matters, political and religious.[12] When Iltutmish was governor of Badaon, the city was humming with scholars from Baghdad, Nakhshab, Muhmara, Ghaznin, Ghur and other places which had suffered at the hands of the Ghuzz and the Mongols. Though full details are not available, Iltutmish could not have remained out of touch with these refugee-scholars of Badaon. Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya used to narrate in his mystic gatherings incidents of his life in Badaon with great appreciation.[13]

Iltutmish received scholars from Central Asian lands with warmth and affection. Sometimes he went miles to receive them.[14] It appears that he was aware of the intellectual and literary output of other Islamic lands. He obtained books like *Adab-us-Salatin* and *Ma'asir-us-Salatin* from Baghdad for the education of his sons.[15] It was under his patronage that *Adab-ul-Harb-wa-Shuja'at* and *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah* were prepared by Fakhr-i-Mudabbir. Muwayyid Jajarmi dedicated to him his Persian translation of *Ihya al-'Ulum* of Ghazzali. This may be taken to mean that the sultan was interested in the intellectual heritage of Islam. Of the poets and scholars who flourished during his reign and enjoyed his patronage, the names of Taj-u'd-din Reza, Amir Ruhani, Nasiri, Shihab Muhmara deserve special mention.

Among the descendants of Iltutmish, Rukn-u'd-din Firuz and Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud had literary interests. Iltutmish and Rukn-u'd-din Firuz got Imam Razi's *Sirr al-Maktum* translated into Persian. The Bibliotheque Nationale has several copies of this work. Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud used to copy the *Qur'an* and earned his livelihood by selling these transcribed copies.[16] Ibn Battuta saw a copy of the *Qur'an* in his hand and appreciated its calligraphy.[17] According to Nizam-u'd-din Bakhshi he usually completed two copies of the *Qur'an* in a year.[18] The proceeds were spent for his own needs. Thomas thinks that the inscription on the Kol Minar was written by the Sultan himself.[19]

Sultan Balban treated the '*ulama* with great respect. Barani particularly refers to Maulana Burhan-u'd-din Malkh, Maulana Burhan-u'd-din Bazzaz, Maulana Najm-u'd-din Damishqi (pupil of Maulana Fakhr-u'd-din Razi), Maulana Siraj-u'd-din Sanjari, Maulana Sharaf-u'd-din Walwalji, Minhaj-u'd-din Jurjani, Qazi Rafi'-u'd-din Gazruni, Qazi Rukn-u'd-din Samana, Qazi Jalal-u'd-din Kashani, Qazi Shams-u'd-din Miraji, Qazi Sadid-u'd-din, Qazi Zahir-u'd-din and Qazi Jalal-u'd-din[20]

as the distinguished '*ulama* of the period. These scholars were sons or pupils of the scholars of Iltutmish's period. Balban used to visit Maulana Burhan-u'd-din Balkhi after Friday prayers.[21] Maulana Burhan-u'd-din was a distinguished scholar who had learnt *Mashariq-ul-Anwar* from its author, Maulana Razi-u'd-din Hasan Saghani, and had received instruction in *Hidayah* from Maulana Burhan-u'd-din Marghinani.[22]

With this account of the '*ulama* and their antecedents and background in view one can safely infer that the sultans of Delhi were not unaware of the intellectual heritage of medieval Islam. They were familiar with the works of Imam Ghazzali, Imam Razi, Maulana Burhan-u'd-din Marghinani and others.

Balban's son Prince Muhammad was known for his literary tastes and activities. As governor of Multan he turned the city into an active centre of culture and learning. In his *majlis Shah Namah* of Firdausi, *Diwan* of Sanai, *Diwan* of Khaqani, *Khamsa* of Nizami were constantly read and scholars discussed the literary merits of classical Persian works. Scholars from near and far gathered round him. Amir Khusrau and Hasan Sijzi served him for many years. He is said to have sent an invitation to Shaikh Sa'di to visit Multan.[23]

Mu'izz-u'd-din Kaiqubad plunged headlong in pleasure pursuits while Jalal-u'd-din Khalji had neither time nor inclination for literary or academic matters. However, in the *majlis* of Jalal-u'd-din Khalji, Amir Khusrau used to present a fresh *ghazal* every day.[24] Some of the *nadims* of the sultan, like Taj-u'd-din 'Iraqi, Muwayyid Jajarmi, Amir Arsalan Kulahi, Taj Khatib and others, were conspicuous for their interest in history and literature.[25] The Sultan's interest in poetry and his poetic flair led him to compose stray verses, even full *ghazals*.[26] Yahya Sirhindi has quoted a quatrain composed by him,[27] which reflects more his licentiousness than aesthetic sensitivity.

'Ala-u'd-din Khalji had no academic interests like Iltutmish or Balban, but during his time Delhi was the hub of the intellectual world of Islam. Within its confines were scholars who were as eminent in their respective areas of study as Imam Ghazzali, Imam Razi, Imam Abu Yusuf and Muhammad Shibani.[28] Barani has named 46 such scholars who flourished in Delhi and raised the academic stature of India in the contemporary world of Islam. 'Ala-u'd-din does not seem to have taken any special notice of them.[29] Perhaps this disregard of '*ulama* was due to his illiterate background.[30] Since he never bothered about the religious aspect of any action taken by him, he had no occasion to come into regular contact with them.[31] His discussions with Qazi Mughis-

u'd-din and 'Ala-ul-Mulk were more in the nature of an administrator's curiosity to know how religion interpreted his approach. Maulana Shams-u'd-din Turk, a scholar from Eqypt, came to India during his time eager to set up a centre of *Hadith* studies in Delhi, but when he came to know that the Sultan was not particular even about his obligatory prayers, he did not proceed to Delhi.[32] 'Ala-u'd-din's disregard of '*ulama* apart, he had a very strong machinery of *ihtisab* (censorship of public morals) under Khwaja Zia-u'd-din Sunnami who had written *Nisab-ul-Ihtisab*[33] for the guidance of *muhtasibs*.

So far as State patronage to '*ulama* was concerned, the situation slightly improved under Mubarak Khalji. But apart from increasing their stipends,[34] he did not take any interest in academic matters and spent most of his time in pleasure pursuits.

Of all the sultans of Delhi, Muhammad bin Tughluq was perhaps the most erudite and intellectually gifted ruler. He knew the *Qur'an* and the *Hidayah* by heart.[35] Early contact with philosophers had made his mind inquisitive and speculative. Chroniclers speak about his rationalistic approach and faith in the supremacy of reason.[36] He was well-versed in Greek philosophy and used to hold regular discussions with philosophers who thronged his court in large numbers. Barani particularly refers to the influence of 'Ubaid the poet, Najm Intishar and Maulana 'Alim-u'd-din who had developed a sceptic and rational attitude in him.[37] He was a gifted mathematician, well versed in logic, metaphysics, rhetoric and medicine.[38] His interest in Persian poetry was such that he gave Ikhsitan sixty thousand *dinars* and sixty horses for a single *qasida*.[39] Sometimes he himself composed verses in Persian.[40] He had carefully studied works, like *Sikandar Namah, Abu Muslim Namah, Tarikh-i-Mahmudi* and could easily quote from them. Endowed with prodigious memory, he remembered vividly many facts and details of historic significance. He understood Arabic, but could not speak the language fluently. He had a taste for Sanskrit and used to associate with Hindu ascetics.[41] According to Shihab-u'd-din al-'Umari, he had one thousand Arabic, Persian and Hindi poets in his court.[42] A brilliant conversationalist, he had such power of debate and discussion that he outwitted the most gifted scholar.[43] He was also a calligraphist.[44] With such intellectual calibre and achievements, Muhammad bin Tughluq was head and shoulders above all his contemporary rulers. No wonder therefore Barani considered him a 'wonder of the creation.'[45]

Muhammad bin Tughluq, it appears, knew also about the literary activities at other Islamic cultural centres, like Shiraz, Samarqand etc.

He sent Maulana Mu'in-u'd-din 'Umrani to Qazi 'Azd with a request to visit India and dedicate his work *Matan Muwafiq*, to him. Sultan Abu Ishaq of Shiraz who had great respect for Qazi 'Azd did not allow him to leave his realm.[46] Muhammad bin Tughluq is reported to have sent Shaikh Abu Bakr b. Khalal, along with some other scholars, to Samarqand to persuade Shaikh Burhan-u'd-din Sagharji to come to India. He gave to this team of scholars forty thousand *tankas* as travel expenses.[47] He sent ten thousand *tankas* to Shiraz for Qazi Majd-u'd-din.[48] In fact Muhammad bin Tughluq is the only sultan of Delhi whose intellectual achievements have been referred to by foreign scholars like Shihab-u'd-din al-'Umari, al-Qalqashandi, Ibn Hajar Asqalani, and others, in glowing terms.

Firuz Shah Tughluq's intellectual level and learning was very low compared to Muhammad bin Tughluq, but he had varied literary interests. He was interested in history and archaeology and took steps to preserve both ancient manuscripts and monuments. The way he removed the Ashokan pillar and got it installed in Delhi[49] shows his interest in the preservation of monuments. His *Futuhat* shows his earnest endeavour to protect the old monuments from decay. He was interested in astronomy and discussed the movement of heavenly bodies with astronomers. This interest was obviously contrary to Muslim religious attitude towards sorcery, incantation and influence of stars on individual life. The *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* has given a religious base to his astronomical interests and investigations by suggesting that it was necessary to regulate the time of prayers.[50] Firuz seems to have taken personal interest in the compilation of books on astronomy.[51] He invented an astrolable also which became known as *Ustarlab-i-Firuz Shahi*.[52] It was fixed on the tower of Firuzabad. Firuz Shah came across a Sanskrit work on astronomy at the Jawalamukhi temple and got it translated into Persian by 'Izz-u'd-din Khalid Khani. This work, known as *Dala'il-i-Firuz Shahi*, was immensely liked by Firuz who rewarded the translator generously.[53] Further he got another work on astronomy, *Barahamir*, translated into Persian.[54]

Of the sultans of Delhi, Muhammad bin Tughluq and Firuz Shah Tughluq are considered to have written their autobiographies. But in the case of the former, a forgery is attributed to him and for the latter it is an inscription which has been considered as an autobiography.

Appended to a beautiful manuscript of *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*[55] in the British Museum are four or five pages which Dr. Mahdi Husain considered to be the surviving fragment of the autobiography of

Muhammad bin Tughluq and observed that "it illumines and explains many of Barani's obscure passages, regarding the psychology and character of Sultan Muhammad. It enables the reader to understand the Sultan's attitude towards his predecessors and particularly towards his own father, Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq. It also explains the causes of the sultan's complete surrender to the Abbasid caliph. Furthermore, the autobiography brings to light the nature of the difficulties confronting the sultan as ruler of India, and finally it helps us to form and estimate the circumstances that led to the break-up of the empire and the troubles that overwhelmed the emperor."[56] Dr. I.H. Qureshi, however, considered these pages to be "part of a Persian version of the Sultan's application to the Egyptian caliph for recognition."[57]

A closer scrutiny of the style and content of the document shows that it is a forgery. In an age when several apocryphal collections of the conversations of the Chishti saints were circulating in the market, the temptation to attempt an introspective study of Muhammad bin Tughluq's life was not queer. But to speak the sultan's language was a herculean task. To rise up to his intellectual level was still more difficult. Muhammad bin Tughluq's sense of history was so mature that every body could not look at the historical landscape with the same vision. References to earlier sultans in these pages betray horrible ignorance of the facts and forces of history. The document may therefore be dismissed as a forgery.[58]

Firuz Shah Tughluq's *Futuhat* was originally written as an inscription for the Friday mosque of Delhi. It deals with the sultan's activities in the realm of religion—his patronage of religious men, attempts to construct and renovate buildings of religious nature, stern dealings with heterodox groups, efforts to bring the revenue administration in line with the laws of the *shari'at*, adherence to the principles of *shari'at* in matters of dress, etc. Barring style, which in an inscription was bound to be brief and to the point, the *Futuhat* has all the characteristic features of an autobiography. It reveals the sultan's anxiety to be treated as a devout Muslim, anxious to introduce the principle of *shari'a* in private life as well as the administration.[59]

The authorship of the famous work *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*[60] is a moot point. It is generally considered to be of anonymous authorship. Internal evidence, however, gives the impression that it was dictated by Firuz Shah himself. It quotes some verses from Mutahhar without citing his name. The involvement of Firuz Shah in one way or the other with its compilation cannot be ruled out. It highlights those aspects of

Firuz Shah's character and achivements which have been briefly referred to in *Futuhat.*

Sultan Bahul Lodi was extremely respectful towards the '*ulama* and was often in their company.[61] He did not mind even their criticism.[62] But nothing is reported about his literary interests. Perhaps the atmosphere in which he had spent his early life, did not permit any intellectual or literary pursuits.

By the time Sikandar Lodi came to the throne, the tribal atmosphere in which Bahlul was brought up had undergone a change. The Afghan community developed literary interests and began to undertake academic pursuits. Sikandar Lodi was interested in academic discussions[63] and had gathered together a large number of scholars at his court. According to Shaikh 'Abul-ul-Haqq, people from Arab and 'Ajam came and settled in his kingdom.[64] Seventy scholars used to sit near his bed at night and discuss different matters with him.[65] Among the distinguished scholars of his period the names of Shaikh Sa'd-ul-lah, Shaikh Rizq-ul-lah Mushtaqi, Maulana Allahdad, Shaikh 'Abd-ul-Wahhab Bukhari, Shah Jalal Tabrizi, Shaikh 'Abd-ul-lah Tulanbi, Miyan Taha and Miyan Khwajgi have come down to us. Shaikh Rizq-ul-lah Mushtaqi was a scholar of Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit. He had profound knowledge of Hindu sciences.[66] Maulana Jalal Tabrizi was known for his mastery over the *Masnavi* of Maulana Jalal-u'd-din Rumi.[67] Miyan Taha was an expert calligraphist, painter, musician and physician. Sikandar Lodi used to say about him that a thousand erudite men had their abode in his person.[68] Shaikh 'Abd-ul-lah and Shaikh 'Aziz-ul-lah encouraged the study of rational subjects,[69] and brought about a radical change in the syllabus of the medieval institutions. Miyan Bhuwa was another distinguished scholar of the period. His *Tibb-i-Sikandari* is a well-known work on Greek medicine. In the epilogue to this book he attributes his literary achievements to the patronage of Sultan Sikandar.[70] Shaikh Hasan Tahir, a renowned scholar well versed in pantheistic philosophy, was invited to Agra by the sultan.[71] The famous scholar-poet of the period, Jamali, a disciple of Shaikh Sama-u'd-din Suhrawardi, was on the best of terms with Sikandar. Sikandar used to compose verses under the *nom de plume* of *Gulrukh* and enjoyed the company of Jamali.[72] Peeved at the Sultan's greater consideration for Miyan Hafiz's views, Jamali left for aimless wandering in Muslim lands. When he returned to Delhi, Sikandar was in Badaon.[73] Initially, Jamali was reluctant to comply with the wishes of the Sultan, but Shaikh Sama-u'd-din persuaded him to go to Badaon.[74] Jamali's elegy on the death of

Sikandar Lodi shows that he had great respect and affection for the Sultan.[75]

Ibrahim Lodi was interested in astrology. Little is known about his literary interests. His relations with three distinguished figures of the period—Miyan Bhuwa, 'Azam Humayun and Jamali—were far from cordial. Shaikh Raju Bukhari sought to patch up differences between him and his brother Jalal Khan, but the Sultan did not agree and got him murdered, embittering Shaikh 'Abd-ul-Wahhab Bukhari against Sultan Ibrahim.[76]

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CHAPTER 12

Religious Leanings and Attitudes of Sultans

trace the impact of religion as a 'social ideal' or as a 'personal ality' on the life of the rulers is fraught with many difficulties. What sometimes appears to be rooted in religious feelings is often found to be the consequence of pragmatic political considerations or *vice versa*. Sometimes, the religious and the political considera-tions coalesce to fortify a particular situation. When the nature of the sultanate became the subject of enquiry, as Barani has done in *Fatawa-i-Jahandari*, many actions and attitudes of the sultans came to be questioned in the light of the religious law.

Minhaj's account[1] of the ethnic origin of the Turkish tribes to which the early sultans belonged shows that their conversion to Islam was a very recent phenomenon. It would, therefore, be unfair to bring their every action under the scrutiny of religion.

It appears that the study of *Qur'an* was generally not ignored by the sultans. Aibek was known as *Qur'an Khwan*;[2] Iltutmish and Raziya[3] took keen interest in the recitation of *Qur'an*; Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud himself copied the *Qur'an*;[4] Jalal-u'd-din Khalji read a part (*para*) of the *Qur'an* every day;[5] Muhammad bin Tughluq was a *hafiz* (i.e. remembered the entire *Qur'an* by heart);[6] Firuz Shah recited the *Qur'an* before appearing for public audience[7] and consulted it for omens and auguries; Sikandar Lodi read three parts (*paras*) of the *Qur'an* in standing position after *Tahajjud* (post midnight) prayers.[8] Even 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji who had little religious learning, remembered by heart some passages from the *Qur'an*, particularly those recited in the prayers.

Iltutmish was deeply religious in his personal life.[9] Minhaj remarks about him: "The probability is that never was a sovereign of such exemplary faith, and of such kind heartedness, and reverence towards recluses, devotees, divines and doctors of religion and law, from the mother of creation ever enwrapped in the swaddling bands of dominion."[10] During his early years in Bukhara and Baghdad, he had come into contact with eminent religious figures of the age.[11] He visited the hospices of many Sufi saints of these places. It is said that Shaikh

Shihab-u'd-din Suhrawardi, the famous saint of the Suhrawardi *silsilah* and spiritual mentor of Shaikh Sa'di, had predicted a bright royal future for him when he visited his *khanqah* in Baghdad during his youthful days.[12]

Iltutmish was very punctilious in offering his obligatory prayers. He used to keep awake for long hours at night[13] and offered supererogatory prayers, but never disturbed any attendant. He was keenly interested in sermons and used to listen to religious discourses even on campaigns.[14] During the month of Ramazan, daily sermon meetings were held in the palace.[15] Sayyid Nur-u'd-din Mubarak Ghaznavi,[16] the *Shaikh-ul-Islam* of Delhi, delivered many sermons in his court about the religious obligations of a sultan.[17] It appears that the sultan did not agree with some of his views regarding the position of non-Muslims in the sultanate.

All contemporary and later writers have lauded Iltutmish's respectful attitude towards the *'ulama* and the religious scholars.[18] According to Minhaj, he spent more than a crore *tankas* a year on them.[19]

Iltutmish was on the best of terms with the contemporary saints of different *silsilahs*—Shaikh Baha-u'd-din Zakariya of Multan, Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Bakhtyar Kaki of Delhi, Qazi Hamid-u'd-din of Nagaur, Khwaja 'Imad-u'd-din and Syed Muhammad Sughra of Bilgram.[20] He went out miles to receive saints who came from foreign lands[21] and overwhelmed by feelings of love and veneration addressed Shaikh Najib-u'd-din Nakhshabi as 'father'.[22] Syed Muhammad Sughra of Bilgram, a saint known for his adherence to the *sunnah* of the Prophet, was with him all along.[23] Whenever Qazi Hamid-u'd-din Nagauri visited him, he stood up to receive him.[24] It is said that Khwaja Qutb-u'd-din Bakhtyar Kaki had left a will that his funeral prayers be led by a person punctual in offering obligatory and particular about offering supererogatory prayers. When Khwaja Abu Sa'id revealed this will, no one came forward to lead the prayers. At last Iltutmish came out of the congregation and led the prayers saying that he did not want to make it known to people, but the wish of the saint had to be fulfilled.[25]

Iltutmish's anxiety for public welfare was widely appreciated. Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya once told his audience that Iltutmish's salvation was due to the construction of Hauz-i-Shamsi,[26] which supplied water to the population of Delhi. His deeply humanitarian and philanthropic spirit took him to old women and poor people every Friday night. He offered money and every possible help and facilities to them.[27] Once famine conditions caused great worry to the people.

Iltutmish sent his messenger to the saints of Delhi to request them on his behalf to pray for rains.[28]

After Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Bakhtyar Kaki's death he sent food to the *khanqah* of Qazi Hamid-u'd-din Nagauri in order to bless the soul of the departed saint.[29] When his son Nâsir-u'd-din Mahmud died, recitation of *Qur'an* took place on a large scale, apart from large scale distribution of alms and charities.[30]

The buildings constructed by Iltutmish developed a religious halo about them. The Hauz-i Shamsi, the Qutb Minar, the Masjid-i-Quwwat-ul-Islam, the Arhai Din Ka Jhopra and some other buildings at Ajmer, Badaon and Bilgram had particular religious sanctity in the eyes of the people.[31]

Hardly was the death of any sultan mourned with such sorrow and grief as that of Iltutmish. Shaikh Jamal-u'd-din Hansvi, a senior *khalifah* of Shaikh Farid-u'd-din Mas'ud Ganj-i Shakar, wrote a pathetic elegy on his death.[32] Referring to his death, 'Isami says: "The king of the East was drowned in the West and the world became dark from the north to south. All the soldiers staggered from side to side weeping bitterly; the whole city shed tears from lane to lane. . . . In mourning for him, the universe shed tears of blood; the world wept for one-third of a month."[33]

Iltutmish's successor Sultan Rukn-u'd-din Firuz had no interest in religion, though court poets, like Taj-u'd-din Reza called him 'extirpator of infidelity', 'supporter of Islam' and 'pillar of the faith'.[34] Nothing could be farther from the truth than this hyperbolic and absurd statement of Taj Reza.

Raziya had been brought up in an atmosphere of learning and culture. Her interest in religion has been referred to by later writers.[35] During her period the rising of Nur Turk took place. It had some religious undertones but the incident has been differently presented by Minhaj. According to him Nur Turk was a Carmathian and was critical of Sunni '*ulama*. This remark has been objected to by Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya who calls Nur Turk "purer than rain water."[36] Perhaps Nur Turk's criticism of the '*ulama* of the period, Minhaj included, who were head over heels in politics, was resented by Minhaj, who retaliated by presenting him as a member of the Mulahida sect and distorted the historical perspective. Once Raziya sent some gold to him. He beat the bag with his stick and asked the messenger to take it back.[37]

Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud was deeply involved in prayers, fasts and meditation.[38] As already stated he used to scribe the *Qur'an* and lived

on its proceeds.[39] His respect for the Prophet was such that he never uttered the word 'Muhammad' without proper ablution.[40] He had cordial relations with the '*ulama* whom he patronized through rewards.[41] The Friday mosque of Meerut was constructed by him.

Balban used to indulge in convivial parties during his early years, but his life underwent a change after accession. He gave up wine and pleasure and took to prayers and penitences in all seriousness and sincerity. "He took a vow of repentance", writes Barani, "...at the same time he took with excess to religious devotions, supererogatory fasts and standing in prayer during the night. He suddenly became regular in attending the Friday and congregational prayers and the supererogatory prayers of *Ishraq* (after sunrise), *Chasht* (forenoon), *Awabin* (past twilight) and *Tahajjud* (post mid-night). He stood all night in prayer on the recommended days and never missed his supererogatory prayers and *aurad* (routine religious formulae) whether staying or travelling".[42] According to Nur-ul-Haqq he was always with proper ablution (*wuzu*).[43] According to the author of *Ma'asir-i-Rahimi*, Balban never entrusted a campaign to anyone unless he found in him qualities of piety and probity.[44] Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya once referred to his religious devotions with approbation. The night of *Qadr* which is of special spiritual blessing is rarely known in general but Balban's spiritual intuition enabled him to identify which night it was, and he devoted it to prayers and meditation.[45]

Balban was fond of the company of '*ulama* who were invited by him for religious sermons and discussions. He did not partake his food without the '*ulama* joining him.[46] He had Sassanid notions of royalty, but dispensing with all his court decorum and discipline, he went to the houses of '*ulama* to attend their discourses. He once requested Maulana Kamal-u'd-din Zahid, a pious scholar of Delhi, to accept the office of his *Imam* (leader of the congregational prayer), but the Maulana declined with the remark: "Our prayer is all that is left to us. Does the sultan want to take that also?"[47] According to Barani "after the Friday prayer he rode with the full pomp and grandeur of his cavalcade and alighted at the house of Maulana Burhan-u'd-din Balkhi ... he had also great respect for Qazi Sharaf-u'd-din Zawolji, Maulana Siraj-u'd-din Sijzi and Maulana Najm-u'd-din Damishqi who were distinguished spiritual religious scholars (*'ulama-i-akhirat*)".[48]

Balban had contact with the saints of all mystic orders.[49] He had presented himself with great respect at the *Jama'at Khanah* of Shaikh Farid-u'd-din Ganj-i Shakar.[50] He accorded warm welcome to saints

who came to Delhi from Chisht.[51]

Balban's attitude towards *shari'at* laws was one of respect. According to Barani he never himself initiated any act contrary to *shari'at* law.[52] His *ihtisab* (censorship of public morals) regulations and his own rejection of wine and women had its effect on the social life and conditions in Delhi.[53] Balban used to visit the mausoleums of great men of the faith after offering his Friday prayers. He attended the funerals of Sayyids and *masha'ikh* and granted dresses and robes to their sons and brothers on the third day of the demise (*siyyum*). He also attended sermon (*tazkir*) meetings in mosques and sometimes wept profusely on hearing a moving sermon.[54]

Balban's successor Kaiqubad threw himself headlong in wine and venery. Indifferent to religion, he neglected his obligatory prayers and fasts. He gathered round him some misguided '*ulama* ('*ulama-i-su*) who gave *fatwa* (religious verdict) that the sultan could dispense with fasts and prayers.[55]

Jalal-u'd-din Khalji's interest in religion seems more due to old age than moral and spiritual convictions as operative principles in life. His melo-dramatic performances on occupying the throne and on entering Balban's palace, the *Kaushak-i-Lal*, were more to attract religious sympathies than a commitment to religious ideals.[56] However, Jalal-u'd-din used to say: "I read a part (*sipara*) of the *Qur'an* every day and offer regularly five time obligatory prayers."[57] He performed his Ramazan fasts even when on campaigns.[58]

In his dealing with the people Jalal-u'd-din kept in view respect for the laws of *shari'at*.[59] He was always hesitant in inflicting capital punishments. The only case in which he allowed state laws to have their course, was the case of Sayyidi Maula.

Guided by political expediency or religious sentiments, Jalal gave a daughter in marriage to Ulugh, a grandson of Chingiz, who had embraced Islam along with several thousands of his followers. A new *mohalla* named Mughalpura, emerged where these new converts to Islam had settled. Ulugh addressed Jalal as "Father".[60]

Jalal-u'd-din once thought of a device to buttress his position through a religious strategem. He told Malika Jahan to suggest to religious men and the elite of the city when they came to felicitate him to address him as *al-Mujahid fi Sabil Allah* (crusader in the way of God). They agreed to the suggestion and Qazi Fakhr-u'd-din Naqila prepared an eloquent memorandum requesting the sultan to adopt the title. However, there was a sudden change in the attitude of the sultan,

perhaps a revolt of his conscience. He revealed to all those who had assembled that he had himself secretly suggested this to Malika Jahan. So saying he stated with deep anguish that whatever he had done in his life was motivated by selfish considerations and had nothing to do with selfless religious service in the name of God.[61]

Jalal-u'd-din Khalji maintained good relations with the saints of the period. Once he sought Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya's permission to visit his *khanqah*. The Shaikh apologized and refused to accede to his request, as it was contrary to the practice of his elder Chishti saints. The sultan then thought of a surprise visit to the *khanqah*. Amir Khusrau, who was *mushafdar* (keeper of the royal copy of the *Qur'an*) at the court, revealed this to Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya who undertook a journey to Ajodhan to avoid meeting the sultan. The sultan was displeased with Amir Khusrau for divulging his secret to the Shaikh. "The sultan's anger", submitted Khusrau, "may lead to loss of my life, but the displeasure of *Sultan-ul-Masha'ikh* would have meant loss of faith for me". Jalal-u'd-din was pleased with this reply of Amir Khusrau.[62]

Despite all his religious sentiments, Jalal-u'd-din was a *bon vivant*, given to pleasure-seeking. His court presented a spectacle of pleasure, with female singers busy in melodious songs and wine cups in circulation.

'Ala-u'd-din Khalji came to the throne after committing the most heinous murder of his old uncle, father-in-law and benefactor. It is said that before committing the murder he went to Khwaja Karak, a *majzub* (one overpowered by cosmic emotion) saint of Kara, and sought his spiritual blessings. The saint prophesied:[63]

> Whoever enters into conflict with thee, may his head be in the boat and his body in the Ganges.

Khwaja Karak was however, not the man to associate himself with any ruler. It is said that after his accession, 'Ala-u'd-din invited him to Delhi. The Khwaja apologised and said:[64]

> "I have nothing to do with Delhi, Arabia, Bukhara or Iraq. I am content with dry bread and vegetable and do not need delicious food—soup or fried meat. Delhi, Samarqand, Bukhara and Iraq all the four may be yours, mine be only Kara."

Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji had an entirely different temperament from his uncle. Without any display of religious sentiments, he was practical, temperate and all the time anxious to improve the moral tone of society.[65] His impact on contemporary life was healthy and far

reaching. Except for once when he thought of founding a new religion, he never meddled in any religious controversy, and kept the domains of religion and state distinct and separate.

It was at the height of his power that the idea of founding a new religion occurred to him. His coffers were overflowing with wealth at that time and some 70,000 royal horses were being maintained in the city and the suburbs. "Two or three kingdoms were subject to his power and he had no opponent or rival to fear."[66] An upsurge of megalomania made him think of emulating Alexander as world-conqueror and Prophet Muhammad as the founder of a new religion. He began to indulge in vain boasts: "Almighty God had given the Prophet (blessing on him) four friends through whose power the *shari'at* had been established. Now Almighty God has bestowed four friends on me also—Ulugh Khan, Zafar Khan, Nusrat Khan and Alp Khan ... I can with their help establish a new religion."[67] 'Ala-u'd-din's ideas which were initially discussed in bout parties reached the people and excited both resentment and ridicule. Ferishta says that when Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya heard about these wild dreams of the sultan, he prayed to God to relieve him of his devilish desires.[68] 'Ala-ul-Mulk, the *kotwal* of Delhi, mustered courage and told the sultan: "Religion and *shari'at* are established by divine inspiration; they cannot be ordained by the wisdom and the counsels of men."[69] When 'Ala-ul-Mulk warned the sultan that if such ideas reached the people insurrection would appear everywhere and "even a hundred Buzurchimihrs would not be able to quell them," 'Ala-u'd-din gave up the idea of founding a new religion. He praised 'Ala-ul-Mulk's frankness, realism and loyalty.[70] It is said that when Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya heard about the frank and bold admonition of 'Ala-ul-Mulk, he praised and blessed him.[71]

'Ala-u'd-din Khalji had very limited knowledge of religion. He himself confessed that he was unlettered and knew nothing except those passages of the *Qur'an* which are read in prayers.[72] He had, however, firm faith in Islam and believed in its moral and ethical code of life.[73]

'Ala-u'd-din was not punctilious about the performance of obligatory prayers and fasts,[74] and did not believe in associating with the '*ulama*.[75] However, he had deep faith in God and turned to Him in supplication for the success of his administrative measures.[76] Once the Sultan asked Qazi Mughis about his legal share in the *bait-ul-mal*, the position of Hindus in the eyes of law and legal nature of punishments given to rebels. Having heard the Qazi's point of view, he thus explained his own position:

> "Qazi Mughis! Though I am illiterate and have read no book whatsoever, yet my ancestors have been Mussalmans for many generations and I was born a Mussalman. In order to prevent rebellion in which thousands are killed, I order whatever I consider to be for the good of the people ... I do not know whether these measures are permitted by the *shari'at* or not ... I order whatever appears to be for the good of my country or advisable under the circumstances. How Almighty God will treat me tomorrow on the Day of Judgement I do not know."[77]

'Ala-u'd-din's measures to remove social ills, to eliminate drinking, magic, sorcery, adultery, prostitution, incest etc. were born of administrative exigencies, but he used to claim that he had enforced the Laws of Prophet in that regard.[78]

Mubarak Khalji's four years and four months of rule, Barani emphatically observers, were spent in merrymaking, wine drinking and pleasure pursuits.[79] He neither offered obligatory prayers, nor kept fasts during the month of Ramazan.[80] The increase in the stipends of *'ulama* to which Barani has referred,[81] was to enlist the moral support of *'ulama*. Jamali says that he had become a disciple of Shaikh Zia-u'd-din Rumi,[82] an eminent Suhrawardi saint. According to Shaikh 'Abd-ul-Haqq Muhaddis, the saint had made him his *khalifah* also.[83] Whatever the nature of this spiritual contact, he remained absolutely unaffected by the moral and spiritual teachings of Islamic mysticism. He is however reported to have ordered the construction of two congregational mosques—one in Delhi[84] and the other in Deogir.[85]

Mubarak Khalji's claim to be the *khalifah* of the age shows his utter ignorance of the real nature of the institution of *khilafat*. This claim was as preposterous as it was whimsical.

The sultan's relations with Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya were extremely unpleasant. As Khizr Khan and Shadi Khan were disciples of the Shaikh, Mubarak suspected that they would enjoy the moral support of the Shaikh and developed acrimonious attitude towards their spiritual mentor.[86] After the execution of their brothers, Mubarak thought of persecuting the Shaikh, but it was not easy as he was immensely popular with the people of Delhi. Mubarak then started hurling abuses at him[87] in the court and even offered a reward of one thousand gold *tankahs* to one who brought his head to him.[88] The Shaikh had never been interested in the politics of the royalty and never maintained any contact with any sultan. He was not interested in any succession struggle. One day the Shaikh and the sultan came face to face at some place. The Shaikh recited before him a tradition of the Prophet

meaning: "Whoever would sit in the company of anybody even for a while would be interrogated by God if he fulfilled the obligation to God in that company".[89] It is not known how the sultan reacted to it, but his attitude towards the Shaikh became more and more critical and hostile. He invited Shaikh Rukn-u'd-din from Multan in order to divert the public eye from Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, but he too had a great respect for the Shaikh to be used for this purpose. Then, the sultan encouraged a critic of the Shaikh, Shaikhzada Jam, to set up a rival *khanqah*, but that device also did not succeed. Some nobles provoked him by further suggesting that the Shaikh refused royal gifts while he accepted the gifts from *maliks* and nobles. The sultan banned the visits of the nobles to the *khanqah* in the hope that it would disturb the distribution of free food in the *khanqah*. But this also did not work. When the Shaikh came to know about the sultan's order to the *maliks*, he increased expenses on the kitchen and the quality and quantity of food served in the *Jama'at Khanah*.[90] When matters started taking a very unpleasant shape, Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya sent Hasan Sijzi to Shaikh Zia-u'd-din Rumi, the spiritual mentor of the sultan, with a message to dissuade the sultan from harassing *dervishes*. But the message could not be delivered as Shaikh Rumi was very seriously ill and died soon after.[91] The Shaikh and the sultan came face to face at the *siyyum* (ceremony on the third day) of the saint. Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya accosted the sultan but he behaved arrogantly and did not acknowledge it. The sultan was always on the look out for an opportunity to harm the Shaikh. He had constructed a congregational mosque in Delhi. On the occasion of the first Friday prayer the sultan invited all *'ulama* and *masha'ikh* of Delhi to offer their prayers there. When Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din was approached he replied that the mosque nearest to his house had greater claim on him.[92] The sultan then asked the Shaikh to come to the court on the first of the moon to felicitate him like other religious men. The Shaikh did not go himself but sent his servant Iqbal as his representative. The sultan took it as an affront and issued orders that if the Shaikh did not come in person the following month, he would be brought in chains and fetters. The day when the moon was to be spotted people of the *khanqah* requested the Shaikh to avoid confrontation with the sultan who was young and ill-intentioned. The Shaikh did not listen to such requests and did not go to the court. The same night Qutb-u'd-din Mubarak Khalji was assassinated by Khusrau, the Parwari youth, and his head was thrown down the Hazar Sutun Palace. Mubarak Khalji's death at the hands of Khusrau Khan was interpreted in mystic

circles as a divine punishment for his arrogant attitude towards the Shaikh. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh once told his audience that on the night of his murder in Delhi, a *majzub* was heard shouting in Awadh:

> "What happened to your country? What happened to your *chatr*?
> What happened to your throne? All passed into the hands of others."[93]

The Tughluq sultans were deeply religious, both by temperament and circumstance. When Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq rose against Khusrau Khan, he appealed to the religious sentiments of the people in order to enlist public support.[94] During the night of conflict he saw a dream in which some saintly figure predicted crown for him. In another dream the same night he saw three moons on the firmament meaning thereby that three distinguished members of the family would occupy the throne. In a third dream he saw a beautiful garden with thousands of flowers blooming in it.[95] He interpreted these dreams as a happy augury for his bright dynastic future.

Ghiyas-u'd-din made an impact on the minds of the people for his piety, unsullied moral character and punctilious performance of obligatory prayers.[96] He did not enter his *haram* before offering his '*Isha* prayers.[97] He fasted during the month of Ramazan and offered *Tarawih* prayers.[98] Most of the time he was with ablution and used to keep awake at night in religious meditation and prayers.[99] Himself a teetotaller, he exhorted people to give up drinking habits.[100]

Ghiyas-u'd-din was on the best of terms with the '*ulama* and the *masha'ikh* of his day. He used to send gifts to them when a child was born in his *haram* or when news came about the victory of his armies.[101] His objection to the *sama'* (audition) meetings of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya at the instigation of '*ulama* and the *mahzar* that he convened in that context has given rise to a feeling that his relations with the Shaikh were not pleasant. Developing this story further, some writers have expressed the opinion that the Shaikh had predicted his fall which meant moral support to Juna Khan who was later charged with patricide. But this is not confirmed by contemporary evidence. In fact, Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya was seriously ill when the Afghanpur tragedy took place.[102]

Muhammad bin Tughluq's adherence to obligatory religious duties was striking. He always got up on hearing the *azan* (call for prayer) and remained standing till it was over. After prayers he spent sometime in *aurad* (reciting routine religious formulae).[103] He did not miss his

obligatory fasts even when ill.[104] If he thought that some animal was not properly slaughtered, he ordered the meat to be thrown away.[105] The sultan's respect for the Prophet was deep and genuine. The inscription on his coins: "Reviver of the traditions of the Last of the Prophets" (*Muhi-i Sunnan-i Khatim-un-Nabiyin*)[106] shows his deep commitment to the traditions of the Prophet. He wanted to go to Hijaz for pilgrimage.[107]

The sultan's personal life was chaste and abstemious. He never committed any sexual or moral crime.

Muhammad bin Tughluq came under the influence of Ibn Taimiyya's movement of religious reform and regeneration.[108] His policy towards the contemporary mystics was largely due to his commitment to Ibn Taimiyya's ideology. He believed in the maxim "state and religion are twins" and therefore rejected the mystic approach of keeping aloof from state service.

Despite all his strained relations with the sufis, he had some inclination towards spiritual life. He was a disciple of Shaikh 'Ala-u'd-din of Ajodhan,[109] widely respected grandson of Shaikh Farid-u'd-din Mas'ud Ganj-i Shakar.

There were four types of *'ulama* during his time: one group kept itself busy in its academic pursuits. Muhammad bin Tughluq respected their devotion to learning and remained on good terms with them. Another group was of sycophants who blindly praised and supported the sultan on every matter.[110] A third group of *'ulama* was of those learned men who were hostile to the sultan and had even encouraged rebellions against him. According to 'Isami they had issued a *fatwa* permitting the murder of the sultan.[111] This group opposed the sultan in his various projects, agricultural and administrative. A fourth group of *'ulama* was that of foreign scholars who were vociferous in praising the sultan and had received generous gifts and rewards from him.[112] According to Qalqashandi two hundred jurists were always there with the sultan at his dinner.[113] When the sultan went on campaigns, *imams* and *'ulama* encircled him.[114]

The sultan married his daughters and sisters to religious men like *Malik-ul-'ulama*, *Shaikh-ul-Islam*, *Sadr-i-Jahan* etc.[115] One of his daughters he married into the family of Shaikh Hamid-u'd-din Sufi Sawali of Nagaur.[116]

The sultan was also keenly interested in religious education of the people. He appointed thousands of jurists in *maktabs* to teach *qir'at* etc.[117]

Notwithstanding the sultan's confrontation with the Chishti saints,

his relations with the Suhrawardi saints, particularly Shaikh Rukn-u'd-din Multani and Makhadum-i-Jahanian Sayyid Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari were cordial. His relations with Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh became extremely bitter perhaps on account of non-compliance of his orders to leave Delhi and settle at Deogir.[118] The sultan's attitude towards Shaikh Sharaf-u'd-din Yahya Maneri was one of respect and devotion. He requested the Shaikh to pray to God "to set right all his worldly and religious affairs". The Shaikh prayed to God as he had wished, but wrote to him also "...it is better and more advantageous to implore God to bestow (on you) what He considers the best for you; and only in this way one can preserve one's faith". Significantly enough, the Shaikh addressed him as 'O Brother'.[119] Once the sultan sent the present of a prayer carpet to him.[120] Once he requested the Shaikh to write a book on *tasawwuf* (Islamic mysticism) for him. The Shaikh complied with his request and wrote two volumes but the sultan was not satisfied. He requested for more but the Shaikh apologised and said that anything more 'would be beyond his comprehension'.[121] According to 'Abd-ur-Rahman he built the *khanqah* of the Shaikh.[122]

The sultan seems to have tried to establish contact with the saint of Panipat, Shaikh Sharaf-u'd-din.[123]

Muhammad bin Tughluq showed great respect to the memory of dead saints. He visited the saints of Ajmer, Bahraich and other places and constructed buildings over the graves of Miran Mulhim in Badaon, Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya in Delhi, Shaikh Rukn-u'd-din in Multan and Shaikh 'Ala-u'd-din in Ajodhan.

Ibn Battuta has given details about the punishments inflicted by the sultan on saints who criticised him or disobeyed his orders.[124] The tortures inflicted by the sultan were horrible and bring to light a sadistic trait of his character.

Firuz Shah Tughluq also had a deeply religious temperament. He loudly broadcast his religious activities through his *Futuhat*. His payment of money in order to obtain *ma'fi namahs* (letters of forgiveness) for the illegal punishments inflicted by Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq and placing these document in a box on the grave of the deceased sultan[125] was, in fact, a declaration to eschew the policies of the late Sultan.

Firuz was seated on the throne in Sindh by a group of religious men, including Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh. During the course of his journey from Sind to Delhi he visited shrines and *khanqahs* of saints and gave stipends and endowments to *khanqahs* which had suffered during

the previous regime.[126]

Perhaps as a reaction to Ibn Taimiyya's ideology, the mystical thought of Ibn 'Arabi became very popular during the time of Firuz Shah. It appears from Mutahhar that *Fusus-al-Hikam* had become a popular study even in *madrasahs*.[127] Shaikh 'Ali Hamadani,[128] Abul Mahasin Sharaf Dihlawi[129] and others wrote commentaries on *Fusus-ul-Hikam*. Mas'ud Bak's *diwan, Nur-ul-'Ain* and his book *Mir'at-ul-'Arifin* publicized pantheistic ideas. Firuz Shah checked public expression of such ideas and punished Mas'ud Bak and Ahmad Bihari[130] for uttering pantheistic ideas which invited criticism of the orthodox sections.

Firuz Shah's main interest lay in *fiqh*. According to the author of *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, he had listened from beginning to end most of the books on jurisprudence.[131] The *Fatawa-i-Firuz Shahi* was prepared at his instance. When 'Alim bin 'Ala compiled his famous *Fatawa-i-Tatar Khaniyah*,[132] Firuz wanted it to be dedicated to him but the author, in view of his indebtedness to Tatar Khan, declined to accede to the sultan's wish.[133] The *Fawa'id-i-Firuz Shahi*[134] of Maulana Sharaf Muhammad al-'Atai was another book on *fiqh* dedicated to Firuz Shah. Considered in the broad perspective of trends in Muslim religious scholarship, the age of Firuz Shah was pre-eminent in the production of *fiqh* literature. Firuz Shah was also responsible for encouraging these trends.[135]

Firuz's relations with saints, particularly Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh, Shaikh Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari, Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar and Shaikh Sharaf-u'd-din Panipati remained cordial. He is reported to have become a disciple of Shaikh 'Ala-u'd-din of Ajodhan to whom Muhammad bin Tughluq also owed allegiance. The *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* particularly refers to his relations with Shaikh 'Ala-ul-Haqq wad-din, Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, Shaikh Sharaf-ul-Haqq, Sayyid Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari and Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar. It is reported that Shaikh Sharaf-ul-Haqq used to send the residue of his milk *sherbet* to Firuz Shah with the words: "Let it be taken and given to my son Firuz."[136] Both the *Sirat* and *Futuhat* refer to the sultan's visits to the houses of saints.

Firuz made a serious effort to bring the financial organization of the sultanate in line with the *shari'at* law. He abolished many taxes which had no sanction in law. It was perhaps due to his interest in amulets and charms that 'Abd-ul-Qawi alias Ziya, dedicated his work *Rahat-ul-Insan*,[136] dealing with charms and amulets, to him.

Mushtaqi has praised the religious spirit of Bahlul Lodi.[138] 'Abd-ul-lah

says that he outwardly adhered to *shari'at* and did not attempt anything contrary to the religious law.[139] Once in his early years, while carrying on trade in horses, he met a *majzub* (mystic overpowered by cosmic emotion), Sayyid Abban. The *majzub* was asking people to purchase the kingdom of Hindustan for two thousand *tankas*. Bahlul offered sixteen hundred *tankas* which he had with him at that time, to the *majzub*. His companions, Qutb and Firuz, ridiculed him for this, but the *majzub*, while blessing Bahlul, said 'these companions of yours will be your servants'.[140]

Bahlul offered his obligatory prayers in congregation. It is said that even in the midst of campaigns, he humbly prayed to God.[141] Once when Sultan Husain Sharqi attacked Delhi he spent his whole night praying at the tomb of Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Bakhtyar Kaki.[142] Religious scholars and saintly persons were often in his company. He was on very cordial terms with the Suhrawardi saints of Multan. He is reported to have once placed his head at the feet of Shaikh Sama-u'd-din Suhrawardi.[143] The Shaikh gave him moral support against Sultan Husain Sharqi and when he died, the Shaikh went to his grave and predicted salvation and high rank for him in the next world.[144]

Sikandar Lodi offered prayers five times regularly, and even *Tahajjud* (post mid-night) and *Ishraq* (after sunrise) prayers, he used to get up three hours before sunrise, take bath, offer *Tahajjud* prayers and then recite the *Qur'an*.[145] He is reported to have appointed *khatibs* (leaders of prayers), cleaners etc. at every mosque in his kingdom.[146] His humanitarian activities won for him the affection of the people. He distributed woollen clothes to the poor and the destitute on a very large scale during the winter and arranged the marriages of poor girls.[147] He introduced some social reforms also, and stopped the procession of the spears of Salar Masu'd Ghazi and banned the visits of women to tombs. He checked the devotion of people to the goddess of smallpox, Sitala.[148]

Sikandar had good relations with the eminent mystics of the period. Shaikh 'Abd-ul-Quddus Gangohi drew his attention to the problems of *'ulama*, saints and *imams*. The tone of the letter and the form of address is highly laudatory.[149]

Sikandar used to shave—a practice which was criticised by Haji 'Abd-ul-Wahhab. It is said that in his last moments he instructed his *imam*, Shaikh Ladan, to calculate the religious penalty that should be paid by him for missing some prayers and fasts, tasting wine sometime and shaving his beard. This amount he paid from his private purse.[150]

Viewed on a whole, Iltutmish's devotion to the esoteric spirit of

religion, Muhammad bin Tughluq's rationalistic temperament and approach to religion as a 'social ideal' and Firuz Shah's adherence to externals of faith stand out pre-eminent in the history of the Delhi sultanate. 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji kept religion and politics in two separate compartments but his deterrent measures against wine, prostitution, incest, blackmarketing and hoarding (*ihtakar*) strengthened the religious institutions of *ihtisab* and created an atmosphere of happiness and security.

References

1. For early ethnic and tribal influx and crisis in Ghur, see *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Habibi ed., p. 323. Minhaj remarks with a feeling of approbation, mixed with surprise, that these tribes eventually embraced Islam and from them rose pious upholders of the faith who promulgated the laws of Islam in India and China.
2. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah*, p. 21.
3. Ferishta, vol. I, p. 68.
4. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 26; *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 56.
5. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 193.
6. *Masalik-ul-Absar*, p. 37.
7. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 278.
8. *Tarikh-i-Shahi*, p. 49.
9. See Nizami's article, "Iltutmish the Mystic" in *Islamic Culture*, April 1946, pp. 165-80.
10. Raverty, pp. 600-601.
11. See Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 102-04.
12. *Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad*, p. 212; *Siyar-ul-'Arifin*, MS, p. 27.
13. *Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad*, p. 213.
14. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, p. 175.
15. Ibid.
16. See *Akhbar-ul-Akhyar*, p. 28.
17. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 41-44; see Barani, *Sana-i-Muhammadi* for a delegation of *'ulama*.
18. *Tarikh-i-Haqqi*, MS, 7af.; *Zubdat-ut-Tawarikh*, MS 10af.
19. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, p. 165.
20. See Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, p. 112.
21. *Siyar-ul-'Arifin*, p. 165.
22. *Saroor-us-Sudur*, MS.
23. Azad Bilgrami, *Ma'asir-ul-Kiram*, pp. 10-13.
24. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 117.
25. *Khazinat-ul-Asfiya*, vol. I, p. 275.
26. *Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad*, p. 119.
27. *Jawami'-al-Kalim*, p. 269.
28. *Siyar-ul-'Arifin*, pp. 154-55; *Khair-ul-Majalis*, p. 45.
29. *Risalah Hal Khanwadah-i-Chisht*, MS.
30. *Tarikh-i-Muhammadi*, MS, 348af.
31. Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 128-30.

32. *Diwan-i-Shaikh Jamal-u'd-din Hanswi*, vol. I, pp. 98-99; vol. II, p. 210.
33. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, pp. 114-19; Eng. tr., vol. II, pp. 245-46.
34. See Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, p. 133.
35. Ferishta, vol. I, p. 68.
36. *Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad*, p. 199.
37. Ibid., p. 199.
38. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, p. 207; *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 156.
39. Barani, p. 26; Ibn Battuta, *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 56.
40. Ferishta, vol. I, p. 75.
41. Minhaj, p. 207; *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 156.
42. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 45-46.
43. *Zubdat-ut-Tawarikh*, 17af.
44. Vol. I, p. 305.
45. *Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad*, pp. 231-32.
46. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 46-47, 102.
47. *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, p. 106.
48. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 46, 102.
49. Ibid.
50. See *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 164-5; Nizami, *The Life and Times of Shaikh Farid Ganj-i-Shakar*, pp. 102-3.
51. *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, pp. 212-13.
52. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 386.
53. Ibid., p. 129.
54. Ibid., pp. 46-7.
55. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 130.
56. For details of his speech on entering *Kaushak-i-Lal* and Ahmad Chap's comments on it, see *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 180.
57. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 193.
58. Ibid., p. 236.
59. Ibid., pp. 185, 202-05.
60. Ibid., pp. 218-19.
61. Ibid., pp. 196-97
62. *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, p. 15.
63 Ferishta, I, p. 100. It appears from this verse that perhaps 'Ala-u'd-din himself was afraid of life and that subsequent developments were the result of better military planning and talent of 'Ala-u'd-din than his initial design to kill Jalal-u'd-din.
64. *Asrar-ul-Makhdumin*, p. 36.
65. Barani, pp. 261-62.
66. Ferishta, vol. I, p. 105.
67. Barani, p. 265.
68. Ferishta, vol. I, p. 106.
69. Barani, pp. 265-67.
70. Ibid.
71. Ferishta, vol. I, p. 106.
72. Barani, p. 296.
73. Barani, p. 339.
74. Barani, pp. 386, 338.
75. Barani, p. 262.
76. *Khair-ul-Majalis*, pp. 240-41.
77. Barani, pp. 295-96.

78. Barani, p. 296.
79. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 387.
80. Ibid., p. 395.
81. Ibid., p. 382.
82. *Siyar-ul-'Arifin*, p. 76.
83. *Akhbar-ul-Akhyar*, p. 72.
84. *Nuh Sipihr*, pp. 75-78, 141.
85. Ferishta, vol. I, p. 125.
86. Barani, p. 396; *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, vol. I, pp. 178-79; *Ma'asir-i-Rahimi*, vol. I, p. 332.
87. Barani, p. 396.
88. Ibid.
89. *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, p. 558; *Durar-i-Nizami*, MS.
90. *Siyar-ul-'Arifin*, p. 76.
91. See Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 290-92.
92. *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, p. 150.
93. *Khair-ul-Majalis*, p. 227.
94. *Tughluq Namah*, p. 58.
95. Ibid., pp. 72-75.
96. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 443; *Tarikh-i-Muhammadi*, MS, f. 398b; *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 92.
97. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 443.
98. Ibid., p. 443.
99. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, vol. I, p. 193; *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 435; Ferishta, vol. I, p. 130.
100. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 443-44.
101. For details, see Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 314-21.
102. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 464; *Masalik-ul-Absar*, p. 37; *Tarikh-i-Haqqi*, MS, f, 32a; *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, vol. I, p. 200. See also Nizami, *The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya*, pp. 119-22.
103. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 506.
104. Ibid., p. 522.
105. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 176.
106. Nelson Wright, p. 120.
107. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 522.
108. For details see, Nizami, "The Impact of Ibn Taimiyya on South Asia", in *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Oxford, vol. I, 1990, pp. 125-35.
109. *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, p. 31; see also, *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 348-49.
110. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 466; *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 111; *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, vol. I, 239.
111. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 536.
112. *'Aja'ib-ul-A'sfar*, pp. 113-15; *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, p. 352.
113. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, p. 72.
114. Ibid., p. 76.
115. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 125.
116. *Saroor-us-Sudur*, MS, p. 72.
117. *Masalik-ul-Absar*, p. 39.
118. For details see Nizami, *Life and Times of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh of Delhi*, pp. 65-78.
119. *Maktubat-i-Sharaf-u'd-din Yahya Maneri*, Patna, MS, Letter, 207f, 216a, 217; Eng. tr. Mahdi Hasan, *Tughluq Dynasty*, pp. 622-24.
120. *Ma'din al-Ma'ani*, p. 471.

121. *Maktubat-i-Sharaf-u'd-din*, MS, op. cit., f. 217.
122. *Mir'at al-Asrar*, MS, p. 696.
123. *Haft Iqlim* as cited in Oriental College Magazine, February 1925, p. 66.
124. For details see Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 373-75.
125. *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 16; *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, MS, p. 77.
126. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 538, 539, 743; *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 392-93.
127. *Diwan-i-Mutahhar*, MS.
128. Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, p. 388.
129. MS in Asafiyah Library (Catalogue I, no. 376).
130. *Futuhat*, pp. 8-10.
131. *Sirat*, p. 151.
132. Five volumes have been edited by Qazi Sajjad Husain and published under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India, 1984.
133. *Gulzar-i-Abrar*, MS.
134. MSS, Aligarh, Bankipur (vol. XIV, pp. 77-83), Asiatic Society (p. 517).
135. Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 396-98.
136. *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, 84b, 86b ff.
137. MS, Asiatic Society of Bengal, p. 716.
138. *Waqi'at*, MS, p. 9.
139. *Tarikh-i-Da'udi* MS, p. 10.
140. *Tarikh-i-Da'udi*, p. 4; *Waqi'at*, p. 4. Such predictions of saintly persons are found floating down the stream of time about Iltutmish, Balban, Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq.
141. *Waqi'at*, MS, p. 10.
142. Ibid., pp. 10-11.
143. *Siyar-ul-'Arifin*, pp. 178-79.
144. Ibid., p. 179.
145. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, MS, f. 38; *Tarikh-i-Shahi*, p. 49; *Tarikh-i-Da'udi*, p. 35.
146. See *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 455-56.
147. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, MS, p. 15.
148. Ibid.
149. *Maktubat-i-Quddusi*, p. 46.
150. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, MS, p. 52.

CHAPTER 13

Sultans as Patrons of Education, Art and Culture

The Mongol devastations in Central Asian lands threw large numbers of scholars, artisans, men of craft and culture into the country. The sultans gave shelter and protection to them, and named many *muhallas* in Delhi after them.[1] They thus became "the saviours of Muslim Culture".[2] 'Isami says that when Iltutmish made Delhi his capital "many tradesmen from the land of Khurasan, many painters from the country of China, many '*ulama* of the Bukhara stock and many a devotee and men of piety came from different regions. Craftsmen of every kind and every country as well as beauties from every race and city; many assayers, jewellers and pearl-sellers, philosophers and physicians of the Greek school and learned men from every land—all gathered in the blessed city like moths that gather round the candle light. Delhi became the Ka'ba of the seven continents (*haft iqlim*)".[3]

The Mongol cataclysm in Central Asia thus became a blessing in disguise for the nascent Muslim state of India, particularly for its cultural efflorescence. Traditions of education, art and culture which had taken centuries to develop in Central Asian lands were imported to India and Delhi could start from the point where Baghdad had left.

Administrative requirements of trained personnel, desire to increase cultural prestige among contemporary rulers, demands of Muslim religious life, patronage of religious classes, personal interest in education and learning, led the sultans to establish *madrasahs* and *maktabs* in their territory. According to *Taj-ul-Ma'asir*, Shihab-u'd-din's conquest of Ajmer was immediately followed by the construction of mosques and colleges in that region.[4] When Bakhtyar Khalji conquered Bihar he established many colleges there.[5] In every new area that the sultans added to their territory, *madrasahs* were established. There were *madrasahs* in Delhi associated with the names of rulers—like the Mu'zzi Madrasah, the Nasiriyah Madrasah—which established the academic prestige of the capital town and scholars from distant parts flocked to it. The Nasiriyah Madrasah was founded by Iltutmish after the name of his eldest son, Nasir-u'd-din. He also founded another *madrasah* at

Multan called Firuzi Madrasah.[6] During the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq there were one thousand *madrasahs* in Delhi alone.[7]

The teachers were generally held in high esteem by the royalty. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir places '*ulama* before the kings in the precedence order.[8] Sikandar Lodi went to the lectures of Mian 'Abd-ul-lah, entered the class with silent steps, listened to him with humility and while leaving offered respectful salutations.[9] He is reported to have founded schools at Mathura and Narwar. These schools were open to all without any discrimination of caste or creed.[10]

Perhaps the only detailed account of a *madrasah* founded by a sultan of Delhi is that of the Firuzi Madrasah of Delhi.

On the southern bank of the Hauz-i-Khass[11]—historic site of the battle which brought the Tughluqs to powers[12]—Firuz Shah built this *madrasah*[13] in 1352. It was one of the most imposing structures of the imperial city. "Its magnificence," writes Barani, "architectural proportions and pleasant air make it so unique among the great buildings of the world that it would be justifiable if it claimed superiority over the *Khwarnaq* built by Sinmar[14] or the palace of Kisra."[15] Its academic reputation travelled far and wide and people flocked to it from different parts of the country.[16] The Firuzian government which was keenly interested in cultural activities made lavish endowments for its maintenance. Many residents of Delhi abandoned their old dwellings and built new houses in its vicinity. Soon a *madrasah* town grew up on the banks of the Hauz-i-Khass which consequently became a humming centre of intellectual activity[17] in the fourteenth century.

The Firuzi Madrasah was a double storeyed building with arched *dalans* projecting windows overlooking the tank.[18] Its facade presented an effective combination of Hindu column and Muslim arch.[19] As soon as one stepped into its portals he found himself in a blooming garden adorned with alley and avenues.[20] With beautiful flowers smiling in every direction and sweet birds chirping on every fruit laden tree, it was a feast for the mind and a delight for the eye to spend some time in the precincts of this *madrasah*. An eminent poet of the age, Mutahhar of Kara, thus records his impressions:

> "The moment I entered this blessed building through the gate, I saw an even space as wide as the plain of the world. The courtyard was soul-animating and its expense was life-giving. Its dust was musk-scented, and its fragrance possessed the odour of amber. There was verdure everywhere and hyacinths, basils, roses and tulips were blooming and were beautifully arranged so far as the human eye could reach. It seemed as if the last year's produce had in advance the current year's fruits, such as pomegranates,

> oranges, guavas, quinces, apples and grapes. Nightingales, so to say, were singing their melodious songs everywhere. It appeared as if they had guitars in their talons and flutes in their beaks."

In this garden there was a platform, ten or eleven feet in height and 40 cubics in length and breadth[21], with a large cupola roof over it. In the centre of this well-laid out and extensive garden stood the commodious buildings of the *madrasah*. Its walls had the smooth and lustrous coating of talc and mica and its vermilion colour reflected the human body like a mirror. The domes and terraces were lavishly embellished with gold. When this high and massive building threw its reflection on the shiny and placid breast of the Hauz-i-khass, it dazzled the vision of the spectators.

The Firuzi Madrasah covered an extensive area. Besides numerous lecture-halls, it had within its campus, spacious hostels for both teachers and the taught, guest houses for casual visitors, a big congregational mosque, rooms for *imams* and *mu'azzins* and *hujrahs* (small rooms) for those who wished to spend their time in meditations.[22] Cosy and comfortable carpets of Shiraz, Yemen and Damascus were spread in every corner of the *madrasah*.[23]

As was expected from an institution of higher learning, the Firuzi Madrasah had eminent scholars on its staff.[24] They were men of distinction in their particular fields of study.[25] The Principal of the institution, Maulana Jalal-u'd-din Rumi[26], was a celebrated scholar of his age. He knew fourteen sciences, could recite the *Qur'an* according to the seven known methods of recitation and had complete mastery over the five standard collections of the Traditions of the Prophet. Besides, he had the unique distinction of having expert knowledge of all the four schools of Muslim law.[27]

The contemporary writers do not give us any details about the curriculum of this *madrasah*. Barani, however, particularly refers to the teaching of *tafsir* (Qura'nic exegesis), *hadith* (Traditions of the Prophet) and *fiqh* (Muslim jurisprudence).[28] As Firuz Shah was keenly interested in astronomy, history and medicine, the possibility of these subjects being included in the curriculum of this *madrasah* cannot be ruled out.

We do not know about the uniform of the students but the teachers of this institution wore the Syrian *jubbah* and the Egyptian *dastar*.[29]

Close personal contact between the alumni and the teachers was considered an integral part of instruction in the middle ages and the Firuzi Madrasah continued those healthy traditions in the most effective manner.[30]

The lecture-rooms in the Firuzi Madrasah were open to students and non-students, inmates and visitors. Mutahhar who attended, along with his friend, the lectures of Maulana Jalal-u'd-din Rumi says:[31]

> "We learnt from his discourses about diverse sciences and acquired knowledge about Qur'anic exigesis, *usul* (general laws) and *akhbar* (history)."

The Muslim method of instruction in the middle ages laid great emphasis on seminars and discussions amongst the students.[32] The Firuzi Madrasah did not neglect this very important method of imparting knowledge. When Mutahhar visited it he found the students busy in discussions and debates and their "voices echoed in the heavens".

The sultan liberally financed the *madrasah* and met all the expenses of the teachers and the students.

The boarding arrangements for the inmates were made on royal scale. According to Mutahhar the following dishes were served at the meals: "Pheasants, partridges, herons, fish, roasted fowl and bulky kids, fried loaves, sweets of different kinds, and other things, were heaped everywhere in large quantities." Pomegranate syrup, prepared with the mixture of sorrel, was served as a drink. Betel-nuts were brought in gold and silver dishes after the meal.[33]

Planned according to the best ideals of medieval education, the Firuzi Madrasah combined the culture of the soul with the discipline of the mind. Barani writes about the religious atmosphere prevailing at the *madrasah*: "Because this *madrasah* is a monument of good works and public benefaction, prayers obligatory and supererogatory are constantly being offered within its precincts. The five compulsory prayers are offered in congregation according to *sunnah*. The sufis offer the *Chasht* prayer (offered between sunrise and meridian), *Ishraq* (prayer offered soon after sunrise), *Fay-az-zawal* (prayer offered immediately after sunset), and *Tahajjud* (prayer offered in the latter part of the night), praise God night and day and send benediction on and sing and praises of the sultan constantly. People who know the *Qur'an* by heart recite the full text every day; the travellers raise their voices to the heavens when they cry *Allah-O-Akbar*. Through the endowments of Sultan Firuz Shah, these people get stipends, *in'ams* (rewards), allowances and charities in cash, and every day tables covered with delicious dishes are spread before the people. Whosoever from amongst the pious men, scholars, men who have learnt the *Qur'an* by heart, members of the

congregation, devotees and persons engaged in religious practices and whosoever from amongst the worshippers of God chooses to go to or enter the Madrasah-i-Firuz Shahi, attains comfort and ease and with an easy mind devotes himself day and night to the task of praying for the long life of the king of Islam."[34]

Another very famous seat of learning in Delhi was the Madrasah-i-Shahzada Buzurg.[35] It was named after the eldest son of Firuz Shah, Fath Khan, who died in 776/1374. A footprint of the Prophet was placed at the grave. The area therefore came to be known as Qadam Sharif.[36] It was a big and well-organized seat of learning, but later on the area turned into a festival ground, and *malang* faqirs gathered there.[37]

Apart from *madrasahs* established by the sultans themselves, there were large numbers of other institutions whose teachers and students received grants from the sultan. Nobles also emulated the sultans in helping educational institutions and encouraging educational activity.

Though Muhammad bin Tughluq had encouraged educational activity on a large scale, his political experiments and ambitious projects left him no time to concentrate on education. Firuz Shah Tughluq's political involvements were of an entirely different nature. He disdained making any bold experiments like Muhammad bin Tughluq. Having entrusted the routine administrative responsibilities to his *wazir*, he directed his attention and energy to projects of public welfare and undertook several programmes of educational development.[38] In fact, he translated into practice Muhammad bin Tughluq's educational ideals and played a very important role in the spread of literacy. Thousands of his slaves were instructed in different subjects and became artisans of different types. 'Afif informs us: "Some of the slaves spent their time in reading and committing to memory the holy book, others in religious studies, others in copying books. Some were placed under tradesmen and were taught mechanical arts, so that about 12,000 slaves became artisans (*kasib*) of various kinds."[39] Firuz Shah's slave establishment is sometimes subjected to unmerited criticism. He raised the social, intellectual and economic status of his slaves, and made them useful members of society.

The curriculum of the state established *madrasahs* was traditional, broadly covering subjects pertaining to *ma'qulat* (rational sciences) and *manqulat* (traditional subjects).[40] *Sirat* refers to the following subjects which were taught in Firuz Shah's colleges: (i) *'Ilm-i-Fiqh* (Science of jurisprudence), (ii) *Qir'at* (Recitation methods of the *Qur'an*), (iii) *Usul-*

i-Fiqh (Principles of jurisprudence), (iv) *Usul-i-Kalam* (Principles of scholastic theology), (v) *Tafsir* (Qur'anic exegesis), (vi) *Ahadith* (Traditions of the Prophet), (vii) *Ma'ani-o-Bayan* (Rhetorics), (viii) *Nahv-o-Sarf* (Syntax and Etymology), (ix) *'Ilm-i-Nazar* (contemplation and observation), (x) *'Ilm-i-Riyazi* (mathematics), (xi) *Tabi'i* (Physical sciences), (xii) *Ilahi* (Metaphysics), (xiii) *Tibb* (Medicine), (xiv) *Tahrir-o-Khatt* (writing and calligraphy).[41]

Significantly enough, *fiqh* in which Firuz Shah was deeply interested tops the list here. Greek medicine (*Tibb*) had a tradition of being patronized by the royalty from the time of the Ghaznavids. Sultan Mas'ud is reported to have bestowed on Alberuni an elephant load of silver coins for his *Qanun-i-Mas'udi*.[42] *Tibb* developed in India under 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji. Barani writes: "In the days of 'Ala-u'd-din there were physicians who in their knowledge of the subject . . . surpassed Hippocrates and Galen. Such top physicians have not been seen at any other time. The Master of Physicians (*Ustad-ul-Atibba*) Maulana Badr-u'd-din Damishqi lived throughout 'Ala-u'd-din's reign and students of medicine in the city studied their books with him. If the urine of man mixed with the urine of some animal was brought before him in a glass test-vessel . . . he could declare immediately the animals whose urine was in the test-vessel. . . . He explained the *Qanun* and the *Qanuncha* of Bu 'Ali Sina and other medical works in his ... excellent and meaningful discourse."[43]

Hindu physicians were also famous for their knowledge of the subject. Barani has particularly named Mah Chandra Tabib and Jaga, the surgeon.[44]

Firuz Shah's keen personal interest gave further incentive to *tibb*. During his time, it was included in the syllabus of the government colleges. The *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* gives a list of diseases and medicines indicating the sultan's interest in the subject. He used to write prescriptions like Muhammad bin Tughluq. He wrote a book entitled *Tibb-i-Firuz Shahi*,[45] dealing with diseases and their treatment.

During the time of Firuz the science of surgery was also developed. New instruments of operation were devised. There was an instrument which was used to find out the position of a child in the womb of the mother.[46]

Veterinary science also received attention of the sultan. He discussed the diseases and treatment of animals in a brochure entitled *Shikar Namah-i-Firuz Shahi*.[47]

Astronomy attracted the attention of almost all sultans of Delhi. In

fact, long before Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth of Gwaliyar developed his *dawat-i-asma* (control of heavenly bodies which determined human destiny) and Humayun became his disciple in the subject,[48] astronomy and its necessary concomitant, astrology, had become very popular in medieval Indian royalty. When Iltutmish returned from Banian having fallen seriously ill, the time of his entry in Delhi was chosen by the astrologers.[49] *Sirr al-Maktum* (the occult secret) which Iltutmish got translated into Persian dealt with talismanic magic.[50]

During the time of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji astronomy and astrologers were in great demand. The sultan tested the accuracy of their predictions and when he found them to be correct he developed great faith in them[51] and gave many grants and reward to them. The ladies of the *haram* also patronized them. According to Barani nobody in Delhi could start any work without consulting the astronomers.[52] Firuz Shah's interest in astronomy surpassed all other sultans. He not only got Sanskrit works on astronomy translated into Persian (like *Dala'il-i-Firuz Shahi*), but collected a whole library of books on astronomy.[53] His obsession for astronomy reached such a stage that hunting of different animals was decided according to astronomical calculations.[54]

An important change in the orientation of the syllabus of those days took place when two favourite scholars of Sikandar Lodi—Shaikh 'Abd-ul-lah Tulanbi and Shaikh 'Aziz-ul-lah Tulanbi—introduced a greater quantum of books on logic and philosophy in the curriculum of the *madrasah*.[55] This tradition of emphasis on rational subjects received further impetus under Akbar.

Considerable development took place in mechanical devices during the time of Firuz Shah. 'Afif[56] has referred to: (1) *Tas Ghariyal*, a gong, meant to regulate the time of prayers. It became his "memento from Khurasan to Bengali". It was prepared by Firuz Shah in cooperation with astronomers and was placed on the darbar hall of Firozabad. (2) *Large size revolving cauldrons*, for cooking ten fat sheep. (3) *Cauldron stands*, with ten legs to carry the 'revolving cauldrons'. (4) *White dome*, with a special portico (*fariza*), a part of the royal camp. (5) *Azhdar Peel*, fixed on the backs of elephants. (6) Huge drums tied to the backs of elephants during hunting excursions. (7) Two astrolabes (*usturlabs*) indicating direction.[57]

Of the arts patronized by the sultans, architecture and music occupied the central position. The cultural traditions of Central Asian lands adjusted and adapted themselves to the new social surroundings in India. If on one side there emerged the Indo-Muslim architecture,

which combined the Islamic or Hindu traditions, on the other Iranian melodies were wedded to the Indian lore and new *ragas* and *raginis* were developed by Amir Khusrau.

Indo-Muslim traditions in architecture took time to crystallize but the process began very early. The sultans displayed remarkable vision and perception in combining the Indian material and Indian workmanship with the Central Asian architectural concepts. The Qutb Minar was a replica of the Minar of Jam.[58] Its material and masons were Indians. Percy Brown has rightly remarked about the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque that its interior structure "although an assembly of elegantly carved stone work had more the character of an architecture miscellany than a considered work of architecture"[59] These traditions of architectural comingling reached an interesting stage in Jaunpur where Islamic, Jain and Hindu traditions were woven into a pattern.

Architecturally a mosque has certain characteristic features: spacious chambers and courtryards for congregational prayers in place of corners for individual devotion and elaborate inscriptions in place of mural paintings and iconography. Similarly, the tombs have their own features. The Indian craftsmen displayed remarkable genius in adapting their style to the Muslim architectural needs in the sphere of mosques and mausoleums. The vault and the dome were accepted by the Indian masons.[60] In the sphere of secular architecture—forts, palaces, tanks, town-gates, gardens etc.—the mingling of Indian and Central Asian traditions was quicker and more remarkable. Referring to the architectural activity during the reign of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji, Barani says: "The eighth wonder of 'Ala-u'd-din's reign was the large number of constructions, mosques, towers, forts and also the digging of tanks. What king has been able to—and what king will be able to—collect seventy thousand skilled masons as were collected together in 'Ala-u'd-din's factories (*karkhana-i-'imarat*), so that in two or three days a palace was built and in two weeks a fort was constructed."[61]

Amir Khusrau was most outstanding expert of musical tones in the court of the Delhi sultans. To him belongs the credit of developing Indo-Persian musical tunes. Almost all the sultans of Delhi, barring perhaps Iltutmish, were interested in music. Muhammad bin Tughluq had twelve hundred musicians besides his slave musicians numbering 1,000 specially for the purpose of teaching music.[62] These singers could not sing anywhere else. The sultan killed a singer if he sang before anybody else.[63]

Sikandar Lodi particularly liked *rag* like *Maligaura, Kalyan, Kanra*

and *Husaini Kanra*.[64] Under him musical traditionals developed further.

Calligraphy as an art attracted the attention of the sultans in medieval India. Even Mubarak Khalji who was otherwise devoid of any literary or academic interest, had learnt calligraphy. Muhammad bin Tughluq was an expert in the art. Work of copying books was carried on a large scale by the slaves of Firuz Shah.

Notwithstanding the fact that Islam has tabooed painting, particularly of human forms and figures, mural painting was very popular with the royalty. The tradition may be traced to the time of the Ghaznavids.[65] When the emissaries of the *khalifah* reached the court of Iltutmish, his palace was glittering with mural paintings (*rashk-i-suratha*).[66] Kaiqubad's palace was beautifully painted[67], but Jalal-u'd-din Khalji ordered on his accession for its further decoration with paintings (*naqshah*).[68] When Firuz Shah came to the throne, the custom of mural painting was a very popular one.[69] He banned completely *naqqashi-i-musawwar* (pictorial painting) on walls as well as on clothes, cups and saucers.[70]

The art of wall painting came from China. The contemporary records refer to *naqsh-i-Khatai* (Chinese painting).[71] Even cloth was imported from China.[72] An art which had been remarkably developed under the sultans was mica paint and polish of walls and roofs. One could see his face in the mica painted walls.

Patronage of scholars and appreciation of literary works and crafts by the sultans of Delhi was extraordinary in certain respects. Iltutmish was so pleased on receiving a copy of *Safinat-ul-Khulafa* that he wanted to bestow half of his country (*neema mulk-i-khud*) to Qazi Jalal Urus who had brought it.[73] Amir Khusrau received fabulous gifts from Mubarak Khalji.[74] Muhammad bin Tughluq's generosity to learned men was known all over the Muslim world. Al-Qalqashandi records a report that once a man offered some books to him. He was so pleased with that present that he gave him a "handful of pearls which were worth twenty thousand gold *mithqals*".[75] Royal patronage to scholars and literary activities went a long way in developing arts and culture.

References

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2. Habibullah, *The Foundations of Muslim Rule in India*, first ed., p. 155.
3. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, Eng. trans., vol. II, p. 227.
4. Elliot and Dowson, vol. II, p. 215.
5. Minhaj, p. 188.
6. Ibid.

7. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, tr., p. 29.
8. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shahi*, p. 11.
9. Badaoni, vol. I, p. 324.
10. Yusuf Husain, *Glimpses*, p. 74.
11. An extensive tank covering an area of over 70 acres of land, constructed by 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji in 1296. It was later repaired and cleansed by Firuz Shah. See Carr Stephen, *The Archaeology and Monumental Remains of Delhi*, p. 83; *List of Monuments*, vol. III, pp. 177-78.
12. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 417.
13. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, tr., p. 127.
    The remains of the *madrasah* possess an historical or Qura'nic epigraph and the only inscriptional decorations one comes across in it are the plastered discs inscribed with one or the other of the following phrases: *Hasbi Allah*, *Subhan Allah*, *ul-Mulk Allah*, *Ya Allah*. See *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, no. 47, p. 77.
14. The Palace of Nu'man bin Munzir in Babylonia, built by a mason named Sinmar.
15. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 563.
16. *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, MS.
17. Barani, p. 563.
18. *List of Muhammadan and Hindu Monuments*, vol. III, pp. 179-80.
19. *Cambridge History of India*, vol. III, p. 591.
20. *Diwan-i-Mutahhar*, Oriental College Magazine, May 1935, p. 136.
21. Ibid.
    This raised platform must have been something of the type of the domed *chattris* described by K.B. Zafar Hasan in vol. III (p. 181) of his *List of Muhammadan and Hindu Monuments*.
22. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 563-64.
23. *Diwan-i-Mutahhar*, p. 137.
24. Ibid., p. 127.
25. Ibid.
26. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 561; *Diwan-i-Mutahhar*, p. 127. Sayyid Ahmad Khan, however, writes in his *Asar-us-Sanadid* (chapter III, p. 27), that the head of the *madrasah* was Sayyid Yusuf who died in 790 AH/1388 and that he was buried in the courtyard of this *madrasah*. Sayyid Ahmad Khan has not cited his authority for this statement.
    There is no inscription on his grave. A modern epigraph engraved on a slab of stone contains his name only. *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, no. 47, p. 77.
27. *Diwan-i-Mutahhar*, p. 127.
28. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 564.
29. *Diwan-i-Mutahhar*, p. 127.
30. Ibid.; *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 564.
31. *Diwan-i-Mutahhar*, p. 127.
32. Shaikh Sa'di has given interesting information about discussions and debates at the celebrated Nizamiyah Madrasah of Baghdad.
33. *Diwan-i-Mutahhar*, p. 127.
    It is strange that gold and silver dishes were used in the Firuzi Madrasah at a time when Firuz Shah had stopped using them in his palace due to religious considerations. See, *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 13.
34. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 562-64.
35. *Sirat*, MS.

36. *The Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi*, pp. 297-98.
37. *Asar-us-Sanadid*, ed., Mo'in-ul-Haqq, pp. 121-22.
38. *Sirat*, 120 f.
39. Elliot and Dowson, vol. III, p. 341.
40. Maulana Sayyid 'Abd-ul-Hayy has discussed the syllabus of medieval Indian *madrasahs* in an illuminating article in *al-Nadwa*, Lucknow, Februay 1909, pp. 3-17. For a detailed discussion about the development of religious sciences during this period, see Nizami, *Hayat-i-Shaikh 'Abd-ul-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi*, pp. 5-46.
41. *Sirat*, 127f.
42. Ferishta, vol. I, p. 44.
43. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 362.
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45. *Sirat*, 340ff.
46. Ibid., 234-40, 319-21 ff., 327-48.
47. Ibid., 104ff.
48. See Nizami, "The Shattari Saints and Their Attitude towards the State", in *Medieval India Quarterly*, 1950, pp. 61-63.
49. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, ed. Habibi, p. 449.
50. Sayyid Muhammad Gisu Daraz of Gulbarga did not consider such occult studies proper. *Jawami'-ul-Kalim*, p. 159.
51. *Jawami'-ul-Kalim*, p. 201.
52. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 363.
53. *Sirat*, 314f.
54. Ibid., 103-04ff.
55. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, vol. I.
56. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 255, 369-70.
57. For astrolabes, see *Sirat*, 293, 314ff.
58. See A. Maricq, G. Wiet, "La minaret de Djam", *MDAFA*, XVI, Paris, 1959; L.S. Leshnik, "Ghor, Firuzkuh and the Minar-i Jam", *CAJ*, XII, 1968-69, pp. 36-49; W. Trousdale, "The minaret of Jam, a Ghorid Monument in Afghanistan," *Archaeology*, 18, 1965, pp. 102-8. See also, Ebba Koch, "The copies of the Qutb Minar" in *Iran*, Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies, vol. XXIX, 1991, pp. 95-107.
59. *Indian Architecture* (Islamic Period), p. 10.
60. Ibid., p. 8.
61. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 341.
62. *Masalik-ul-Absar*, tr., p. 32.
63. Ibid.
64. A. Halim, *History of the Lodis of Delhi and Agra*, pp. 126-27.
65. Baihaqi, *Tarikh-i-A'l-i-Subuktigin*, p. 135.
66. Taj Reza's *qasida* on the occasion. *Maqalat-i-Hafiz Mahmud Sherani*, vol. V, p. 361.
67. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, p. 25.
68. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 176.
69. 'Afif, p. 290.
70. 'Afif, p. 374; *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 13-14.
71. *Qir'an-us-Sa'dain*, p. 26.
72. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, tr., p. 51.
73. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 103.
74. *Nuh Sipihr*, p. 48.
75. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, tr., p. 64.

CHAPTER 14

The Sultans and Public Welfare

While discussing the essential duties of a ruler, Amir Khusrau refers particularly to his obligation to strive for the welfare (*asudgi*) of all people (*khas-o-'am*).[1] This welfare activity comprised creating amiable conditions in populated areas, as well as in wilderness, safety of roads and prosperous conditions.[2] Amir Khusrau has particularly emphasized one fact: efforts in the direction of welfare should be for all people—high and low. In fact, he considered the general public more worthy of attention than the affluent sections of the population.[3] He asked the rulers to create such conditions in towns and villages that the rich and the poor alike felt comfortable.[4]

'Ala-u'd-din Khalji's market control was, according to Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh, intended to benefit all people (*hama khalq*).[5] 'Isami says that once the sultan was in convivial assembly, when a reporter brought to him the news that due to drought some old people had died in market. The sultan stopped drinking at once, repented for his sins, wept and turned to alleviating the misery of the people.[6]

It was generally believed that interest in works of public welfare increased the span of a ruler's life.[7] Fakhr-i-Mudabbir considered construction of mosques, *madrasahs*, bridges, wells, rest houses etc. a duty of the kings and a necessary charge on public exchequer.[8]

Water Supply

Particular care was taken by the sultans to ensure the supply of water to the people both for drinking and irrigation purposes. Prosperity of the people and economic development of areas dependent on the availability of water. 'One living near the spring never starved' was a medieval saying. Wells, tanks, *baolis*, *bains*, reservoirs, aqueducts, channels and canals were constructed keeping in view the needs of the people, the nature of the soil and distance from market. Some of the techniques and methods of irrigation known and practised in Central Asia were adopted by the sultans also. The Persian wheel was used in and around Delhi. Tatsuro Yamamoto, Matsuo Ara and Torifusa

Tsukinowa have made a very illuminating study of waterworks in Delhi in the third volume of their work *Delhi—Architectural Remains of the Delhi Sultanate Period*.[9] Not only the vastness of the areas covered by canals but the techniques adopted to carry and store water were exquisite.

Iltutmish constructed tanks in Delhi, Ajmer and other places. Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya considered his efforts in this direction so worthy of appreciation that he told his audience that Iltutmish's salvation would be due to the construction of Hauz-i-Shamsi.[10] The Hauz-i-Shamsi became a centre of brisk cultural activity in medieval Delhi.[11] In its vicinity grew up the complex of Shamsi Delhi which, notwithstanding the political upheavals, continued to occupy the central position in the social and cultural life of the capital. All types of people gathered here—poets, mystics, scholars, vegetable sellers, peasants and princes. A *masjid* called Auliya Masjid also appeared on its bank.[12] There is evidence of water reservoirs being constructed by Iltutmish in other parts of the country also. He constructed a reservoir at Khatu (in Marwar).[13] In 1211 Badr-u'd-din Sanqar constructed a *hauz* at Palwal which provided water to both men and animals.[14]

'Ala-u'd-din Khalji constructed in the very first year of his reign (1296) the famous water reservoir Hauz-i-'Alai or Hauz-i-Khass. It covered an area of 70 acres and supplied water to Delhi.[15] As the Hauz-i-Shamsi dried up, 'Ala-u'd-din took steps to de-silt it and built a dome over it in the centre.

Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq was also keenly interested in developing water-supply and providing irrigation facilities for the people, but his sudden death cut short his work. He had planned to open a network of canals from the Ganges and the Jumna[16], in order to bring vast areas under cultivation. Muhammad bin Tughluq formulated an elaborate agricultural policy, known as *asalib*, to develop agriculture.[17] According to Barani, if all his schemes would have been implemented, no fallow land would have remained in the country.[18]

Firuz Shah Tughluq achieved great success in ensuring water-supply for irrigation purposes. He assigned this work to a special officer to implement and push through his schemes of canal construction. 'Ain-ul-Mulk Mahru refers to the repair of several canals during this period. The sultan got excavated the canals named Rajiwaha and Ulugh Khani for the supply of water to his newly founded city of Hisar Firuza.[19] It is reported that before the construction of canals, water was so scarce in this region that during the summer a foreign traveller had to pay 4

jitals per pitcher.[20] Firuz Shah is reported to have remarked before founding Hisar Firuza: "I will build this city and I hope that by the grace of God the land will be full of water."[21] The author of *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* refers to the following six canals of Firuz Shah[22]:

1. Canal of Tughluq Shah
2. Canal of Ulugh Khan
3. Canal Rajiwaha
4. Canal Firuzabad
5. Canal Firuz Shahi
6. Second canal Firuz Shahi

Yahya Sirhindi gives details about some more canals.[23] The geographical and ecological considerations which had determined the construction of canals of Firuz Shah become evident from the fact that in 1568 Akbar re-excavated some of the canals of Firuz Shah. During the British period Major Colvin[24], Lt. Barker[25], Lt. Yule[26] and Gordan Hearn[27] made extensive surveys of the canals of Firuz Shah and brought many important details to light. According to Edward Thomas "the most important fact of Firuz Shah's reign was the construction of a double system of canals to supply his new city of Hisar Firuza, the head waters of which were drawn both from Jumna and Satlej. Both these canals continue till the present day. The Satlej section may be seen from Ruper to Sirhind."[28]

The construction of canals by Firuz Shah led to the springing up of a thousand villages on the banks of these canals and encouraged cultivation.[29] Waste lands were everywhere brought under cultivation.[30] The number of tanks constructed by Firuz Shah was amazing. Hauz-i-Fath Khan, Hauz-i-Mubarak Khan, Hauz-i-Tughluq Shah, Hauz-i-Nusrat Khan, were particularly famous in Delhi.

Sirat refers to the following fifteen tanks:

1. Hauz-i-Fath Khan, near Firozabad
2. Hauz-i-Mubarak Khan
3. Hauz-i-Tughluq Shah
4. Hauz-i-Shikar Khan
5. Hauz-i-Khas near Malja Daun
6. Hauz-i-Firuz near Khatuni
7. Hauz-i-Nusrat Khan
8. Hauz-i-Shadi Khan
9. Hauz-i-Sipahsalar
10. Hauz-i-Buzurg Firuz near Khatuni
11. Hauz-i-Fath Khan

12. Hauz-i-Tughluq near Hastipur
13. Hauz-i-Sipahsalar near Basaka
14. Hauz-i-Fath Khan behind Mahanwasi Palace
15. Hauz-i-Fath Khan near Badghar in Hisar Firuza Kushk

Perhaps the desire to perpetuate the memory of his deceased son, Fath Khan, led Firuz to name several tanks, *madrasahs* etc. after him. According to Ferishta, Firuz made 50 dams across the rivers for promoting agriculture, 150 wells and 100 bridges.[31] Barani has praised Firuz Shah in a whole section (*Muqaddama*, VI) for his interest in providing irrigation facilities and the benefits that accrued to the people from his projects. He writes: "During (this period) . . . canals (as big as) the Jumna and the Ganges, have been dug spreading over long distances of about fifty or sixty *karohs* in deserts and wildernesses where there was absolutely no tank or well. The flow of water in these canals has made boats necessary... people complete their journeys by riding in boats. . . . Providing water . . . is the greatest of good deeds, both for the removal of thirst and for the cultivation of the sugarcane, vineyards, and the higher grades of grain and the maintenance of orchards. . . . His Majesty has caused water to flow in long canals in desolate wildernesses and burning deserts. . . . Water reached territories where travellers had not the courage to cross without taking with them *mashaks* (sheep-skin tanned to carry water) *mutahhiras* (vessels for ablution) and *shibah* (copper vessel). . . . Many died of thirst there and . . . animals perished from thirst, birds would not find a drop of water to moisten their beaks. . . . Now (these areas) have *farsang* and *farsangs* of canals in which water flows as in the Jumna and the Ganges. . . . God only knows how many thousand villages will grow up by the side of the canals, how many kinds of grain and crop will be raised by agriculture . . . and how low will be the price of grain in those areas. . . . Many human beings which had been living in *talwandis* (carts in which families live for twelve months) . . . will now build villages of houses and stock them with grain. . . . Instead of moth they would be able to cultivate sugarcane, wheat and gram ... their cattle will increase a thousand fold ... the *raiyyat* will have better means of livelihood, the *walis* and *muqtas* ... greater income and stability in *khiraj*.... The merchants of Delhi (earlier) used to sell wheat, gram, and sugar in that region at the price of cloth ... now they will export these products as a merchandise to other places. . . . Now will grow roses and flowers of every kind and fruits like pomegranates, grapes, water-melons, figs, etc. . . . its benefits will accrue to all living creatures, men and animals."[32]

Care of the Sick and the Hospitals

A very important welfare work of the sultans was establishment of hospitals (*bimaristan*) for the people. During the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq there were seventy *Dar-ush-shifa* (hospitals) in Delhi.[33] It was perhaps over and above the ordinary hospitals that Firuz Shah established a hospital with all possible facilities that a medieval government could provide. He writes in his *Futuhat*:

> "Again God made it possible for me to establish a hospital to which the high and low suffering from a disease, or afflicted by pain, might come. Physicians are in attendance to diagnose the disease, prescribe treatment and diet, and distribute medicines (to the patients). The cost of medicines and food is defrayed from the endowments earmarked (for the purpose). All sick persons, residents or travellers, nobles or plebians, freemen or slaves, resort thither and they are treated there, and through Divine mercy, are cured of their ailments."[34]

Firuz Shah set apart the income of some flourishing villages for charity and medical facilities.[35] There were physicians as well as surgeons, nurses and attendants at the hospital. All types of diseases were looked into and treated free. Eye specialists were also there to treat ailments of the eye.[36] The list of diseases treated as given in *Sirat* shows that from lengthening of hair to wounds in kidney and leprosy there was hardly any ailment which was not treated at the Firuz Shah Hospital. Free special diet was also provided to the patients.[37]

Roads

Construction of roads and planting of trees were other essential items in the welfare programme of the sultans. Balban created absolutely peaceful conditions for the movement of travellers and merchants in the most disturbed areas.[38] 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji and the Tughluq sultans ensured perfect safety of roads. When Muhammad bin Tughluq decided to make Deogir the second administrative city of the empire, and forced the elite of Delhi to migrate to Daulatabad, he provided all possible facilities of travel. Yahya Sirhindi informs us: "At a distance of every two miles (*karohs*) along the road from Delhi to Daulatabad, the sultan constructed halting stations and transformed the whole uninhabited area into a habitation. To the people in these regions he gave lands to dwell in, and the income of these lands was to be accounted for in their salaries. He also planted trees on both sides of the roads."[39]

Rest Houses

Rest houses were established by the sultans for the wayfarers and the

travellers. While *sarais* and inns were run by the people, rest houses were maintained by the state mainly on roads leading to different parts of the empire.[40] Firuz Shah added one hundred and twenty rest houses to the existing ones. A traveller could stay there for three days. These rest houses always remained overcrowded.[41]

Arrangement for Light

Provision of light was made in bazars, mosques, *madrasahs*, caravan-sarais, inns and mohallas.[42]

Preservation of Ecology

The sultans, particularly Firuz Shah Tughluq, were keen to preserve the ecology of Delhi. The following information supplied by *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* is very interesting in this context. When the Firuzabad castle was under construction, the engineers presented that between the walls of the palace there were trees of Moghilan (thorny trees). The sultan turned down the petition to cut trees with the remark:

> "These trees, that we see now, are very old. During *Shikar* we have taken shelter and rest under their shades. Besies, crows have built their nests on them. It is, therefore, not proper that these trees be cut down and crows destroyed. Let the trees remain in the building, as they are inside the palace, and the walls of the palace may be built. If any one would act otherwise, he shall be considered an offender."[43]

This order to protect the nests of crows appears freakish and ridiculous when the wanton destruction of animal life indulged in by Firuz Shah in his hunting excursions is kept in mind.

Diwan-i-Khairat

The *Diwan-i-Khairat* was specially charged with the responsibility of helping the needy.[44] In times of famine, the sultans opened the royal granaries and distributed large quantities of grain to the starving people.[45] Once when the people were hard hit by the scarcity of corn, Sikandar Lodi remitted tax (*zakat*) on corn and never imposed it again.[46] The income from *zakat* (charity claimed from the total hoarded income of a year) was also used for charitable purposes.

Distribution of Food

Distribution of food to the poor was arranged by the state on a large scale. At some tombs of the sultans, *khatmis* were kept to recite the

Qur'an and free food was distributed there.[47] Some *khanqahs* received money from the sultan for maintaining *langar* establishments. Muhammad bin Tughluq took action against Shaikh Hud, a Suhrawardi saint of Multan, for misuse of funds provided for feeding the poor.[48]

Help of the Poor

The sultans considered it an obligation of kingly responsibility to help the poor and the destitute. Iltutmish used to spend more than a crore *tankas* on the poor and needy.[49] He went out at night incognito to personally know about those in distress.[50] Sikandar Lodi distributed cooked and raw food to the poor at several places in the city.[51] During the winter season blankets were distributed.[52]

Marriages of Poor Girls

Helping the poor parents to arrange the marriages of their daughters was a charge on the *Diwan-i-Khairat*.[53] The author of *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* informs us: "People from different quarters of the country frequently visit the city mosque of Firuzabad, as the head office of the *Diwan-i-Kahairat* is established there and get money for performing marriages."[54] Sikandar Lodi gave his cot and bedding every week to be sold and spent on the dowry of the daughters of widows. According to Ahmad Yadgar, about one thousand girls were thus married every year.[55] It appears that this practice had continued from the time of Balban. Barani informs us about Fakhr-u'd-din, the *kotwal* of Delhi under Balban: "... A new cot and bedding were provided for him every night, the cots and beddings collected were given to orphans and the daughters of the deserving. Every year he provided dowry to one thousand daughters of the destitute."[56]

Help to Widows

Helping the widows and orphans was considered a sacred duty. Aibek gave to them in charity enormous sums of money.[57]

Work for the Unemployed

Crime was considered by the sultans to be the result of want.[58] They therefore, tried to find out ways and means to keep the poor fruitfully engaged. 'Afif has referred to Firuz Shah's efforts to find employment for the unemployed. The *kotwal* produced before him the unemployed people for whom he found some employment.[59]

Protection of People from Exploitation by the Army and Protection of the Interests of the Soldiers and Their Families

Medieval writers have particularly drawn the attention of rulers to the protection of people—particularly artisans and cultivators—against exploitation by the soldiers.[60] Fakhr-i-Mudabbir considers it an essential obligation of the ruler to protect the privacy of families and see to it that soldiers did not disturb the people.[61] Amir Khusrau recommends generous and kind hearted treatment of soldiers who risk their lives for the sake of the ruler but strongly urges protection of crops from becoming the fodder of the horses.[62]

Referring to the interests of the families of the soldiers on the battlefield, Fakhr-i-Mudabbir mentions an order of Caliph 'Umar that soldiers were not to stay away from their wives for more than six months.[63] The ruler was also expected to ensure that the soliders were not exploited by the traders and craftsmen.[64]

References

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2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p. 239.
4. Ibid., p. 242.
5. *Khair-ul-Majalis*, pp. 240-41.
6. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 314.
7. The author of *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* (90b-92aff.) cites interpretation of a Qur'anic verse in support of the view. It was believed that Persian kings had long lives because they constructed canals and populated cities.
8. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah*, p. 17.
9. Tokyo, 1970.
10. *Fawa'id-ul-Fu'ad*, p. 119. See also, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, vol. I, pp. 61-62.
11. See *Miftah-ut-Talibin, Malfuz* of Khwaja Qutb-u'd-din Bakhtyar Kaki, MS.
12. *Asar-us-Sanadid*, p. 74; *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 46.
13. *Proc. 8th All India Oriental Conference*, 1935, article by M.A. Chaghtai, "An unpublished inscription of the time of Sultan Iltutmish—showing the construction of a reservoir at Khatu (Marwar)", pp. 432-634.
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15. For Khusrau's account of the tank, *Khaza'in-ul-Futuh*, English, tr., pp. 19-20.
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17. Barani, p. 499.
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19. 'Afif, p. 127.
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30. *Sirat*, 161f; 'Afif, p. 295.
31. Vol. I, p. 151.
32. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 567-68.
33. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, p. 29.
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35. 'Afif, pp. 359.
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37. *Sirat*, 120-23bff.
38. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 57ff.
39. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 98.
40. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah*, p. 17.
41. 'Afif, pp. 329-30; *Sirat* 180f.
42. *Sirat*, MS. 90b-92aff .
43. *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, 106b-7bff.
44. 'Afif, pp. 349-51.
45. *Fatawa-i-Jahandari*, pp. 131-32; 'Isami, pp. 211-12.
46. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, vol. I, pp. 320, 335; *Tarikh-i-Da'udi*, p. 54.
47. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, pp. 225-26.
48. Ibid., pp. 144-45.
49. Minhaj, p. 165.
50. *Jawami' al-Kalim*, p. 269.
51. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, vol. I, p. 336.
52. Ibid.
53. 'Afif, pp. 329-51.
54. *Sirat*, 123bf.
55. *Tarikh-i-Shahi*, p. 49.
56. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 117.
57. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah*, p. 35.
58. Barani, p. 436.
59. 'Afif, pp. 334-36.
60. *Adab-ul-Harb*, p. 20.
61. Ibid., p. 116.
62. *Nuh Sipihr*, pp. 256-58.
63. *Adab-ul-Harb*, p. 79.
64. Ibid., p. 117.

Chapter 15

Sultans as Builders of Cities

Discussing the role of cities in the political life of the medieval period, Ibn Khaldun remarks that every new dynasty needed a new urban power base. This is true of the Delhi sultanate also. Considerations of personal safety, consolidation of the ruling house, demands of geo-politics, economic exigencies, safety and control of the means of communication led to the foundation of new cities by the sultans of Delhi. It was necessary for a ruler to have his residence in the midst of loyal and devoted population. The population also, in search of better opportunities of employment and better trade opportunities, drifted to places where royal palaces moved. Sometimes, wherever canals were dug and water resources increased, rise of new townships became inevitable. The changing sites of Delhi reflect these trends of the period. Delhi was so strategically situated that it could not be abandoned, but new areas could be added and new localities could be developed around it. As was inevitable, in course of time Delhi became an agglomeration of several cities. Ernst Kühnel has rightly remarked: "Delhi grew enormously in the 13th and 14th centuries; the princes embellished the town with more and more new buildings, and court life was characterized by the variety of nationalities among its officials, military officers and scholars who came from every Islamic country to achieve office and honour there."[1] During the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq there were twenty-one cities to which the name Delhi applied. The circumference of the populated area increased in course of time to forty miles.[2]

The sultans of Delhi were interested in building new cities, whenever and wherever possible. Their architectural activities were identical to the activities "at Samarra in Iraq, Ibn Tulun in Cairo, and that of Raqqah in Syria."[3] The city of Delhi with its lofty minarets, extensive mosques[4] and big water reservoirs, rose under Aibek and Iltutmish. To transform a city which had developed remarkably under a regime which had been overthrown, was a stupendous task, particularly when the record of its cultural impact had been long and far-reaching. It

needed imagination, patience and careful planning to create homogeneous areas for the new population, build huge buildings to mark the beginning of a new regime[5] and ensure utilization of the indigenous resources in men and material. Though Delhi changed its centre of gravity in almost every regime, the position given to it by Iltutmish remained almost intact.

During the time of Balban, mostly repair of old buildings rather than construction of new forts and cities was undertaken. This was due to increasing Mongol pressure on the frontiers. Balban's cousin Sher Khan founded the city and fort of Bhatner with a big tower[6] and Balban ordered the reconstruction of the fort of Lahore.[7] 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji also rehabilitated cities which had been destroyed by the Mongols.[8] Balban built his *Kaushak-i-Lal*[9] in 1255, and added to the glory and grandeur of Delhi. Kaiqubad shifted to Kilugarhi, on the bank of the river Jumna, goaded more by his pursuit of pleasure than any political exigency. Kilugarhi became a haunt of pleasure for the king and the nobles alike. The population that moved to that locality followed the ways of the royalty.

'Ala-u'd-din Khalji's one great ambition was to do things which made his 'fame catch the skirt of the Day of Resurrection.'[10] Buildings alone could serve this purpose. Besides, the new imperial policy initiated by him needed large scale and impressive building activity. In 1303 he founded the city of Siri some three miles to the north-east of the Qutb Minar. According to Marshall, it was built in order to protect the overgrowing population of the suburbs.[11] Both Cunningham and Carr Stephen identify the town of Siri with the present village of Shahpur.[12] Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji built the *Qasr-i-Hazar Sutun* after his victory over the Mongol invader Targhi. The use of thousands of Mongol heads in these buildings was a horrible act of barbarity but was considered necessary in order to horrify the Mongols and check their inroads.

Amir Khusrau has given an eloquent account of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji's building activity.[13] He places the administrator and the builder above the conqueror and extols his achievements. It appears that the sultan had issued orders for the repair of forts and buildings "in any part of the Empire".[14]

The Tughluq sultans were great builders of cities. Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq founded Tughluqabad; Muhammad bin Tughluq founded Jahanpanah, 'Adilabad and Daulatabad. Firuz founded many cities like Hisar Firuza, Firuzabad, Fathabad and Jaunpur with mosques, rest houses, hospitals, garden etc. A fort was built by him at Sirhind and was named Farhatabad.[15] A number of minor townships like Firuzabad,

Harni Khera, Tughluqpur Kasna, Tughluqpur Muluk Makut, Ferozepur and Akhrinpur were also established.

Muhammad bin Tughluq had his own views about city life and city planning. The principles that guided his foundation of new cities and palaces have been thus explained by al-Qalqashandi:

> "There are palaces and special mansions where he (the sultan) and his family reside and there are quarters for his maid servants and favourite slaves and the houses of his male servants and slaves. None of the Khans and Amirs live with him and none of them can stay there except when he comes on some business; then every one of them retires to his own house. Delhi has gardens on its three sides—east, south and north in straight lines; every line in twelve miles. As regards the western side it is destitute of gardens on account of the proximity of numerous ravines, and beyond that there are cities and numerous districts."[16]

Muhammad bin Tughluq's attention towards the beautiful location and healthy climate of Deogir was drawn by Amir Khusrau when he went there with him during the time of Mubarak Khalji. His *Sahifat-ul-Ausaf*[17] throws light on the factors that must have influenced Muhammad bin Tughluq's choice of that region. The sultan seems to have very patiently thought out the plan of the city. Shihab-u'd-din al-'Umari writes:

> "The Sultan had divided it (Deogir) in such a wise way that separate quarters were built for every class of people; a quarter for the troops; a quarter for the Wazirs, a quarter for the Secretaries, a quarter for judges and the learned men, a quarter for the Shaikhs and Faqirs and a quarter for merchants and handicraftsmen. In every quarter there were found, according to the needs of every class, mosques, minarets, bazars, public baths, ovens for (baking) flour; so that the people of that quarter did not depend upon the other quarter for selling and buying and exchanging things and that each quarter was in the position of a separate self-contained city and not dependent on others for anything."[18]

The Sayyid rulers also evinced keen interest in the founding of new cities, despite the unstable political conditions in which they had to work. Khizr Khan founded Khizrabad and Mubarak Shah laid the foundation of Mubarakbad on the banks of the Jumna.[19] No archaeological remains of these cities have survived. 'Ala-u'd-din 'Alam Shah, the last Sayyid ruler populated A'lapur in the Badaon district. The disappearance of these cities from the map was due to hasty and immature decisions about their strategic and economic viability.

Acting with great caution and in search of a strategic township to keep hostile elements in check, and create an effective cantonment

station, Sikandar Lodi appointed in 911/1506 a commission to sail in the Jumna and recommend suitable place for founding a city.[20] The sultan himself went to see the suggested sites. He saw two elevated places from Muttra and asked his boatman about the place he liked. He pointed to the place in front (Agra). The sultan agreed, gave the name *Agra* to the place and ordered the foundation of a city there.[21] The history of the town during the Mughal period confirmed the political vision of Sikandar in selecting the place.[22]

Sikandar Lodi is reported to have destroyed many old cities, like Dholpur, Kantat, Rewa and Jaunpur as a retribution for the activities of rival powers. The forest garden of Dholpur was so attractive and unique that it cast its shade for about fourteen miles. In Jaunpur he wanted to blow up even the mosques, but the *'ulama* protested and under pressure of public opinion he desisted from it.

Architectural designs and layouts very often symbolize the aspirations and ideals of the planner. Iltutmish's Delhi is an instance in point. Only the architect of an Empire could visualize a city with such lofty structures as the Qutb Minar, the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque and the Hauz-i-Shamsi. These buildings proclaimed the rise of a new political power and the emergence of a new social order. 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji, with whom began the era of imperialism, thought of a bigger mosque, a higher tower and a larger tank. His buildings were inspired by the same ideals which had stimulated Iltutmish, but for a variety of reasons he could not make the same impact on the mind of his contemporaries or the posterity as Iltutmish had done. His *minar* remained incomplete and what he could achieve was extension of Iltutmish's city, tank and mosque. Balban's rehabilitation programme—new settlements of Turkish nobles in Katehr, repair of fortresses and cities in the frontier region—aimed at consolidation of power but lacked the vision of Iltutmish. Muhammad bin Tughluq sought to achieve definite geo-political objectives through the creation and control of cities. He was anxious to achieve the political and administrative unity of India, and pull down the barriers—political as well as intellectual—which separated the North from the South. Perhaps no ruler after Asoka had visualized India as a political and administrative unit in the same way as Muhammad bin Tughluq. His creation of a second administrative city in the south, the city of Daulatabad, was a part of that programme.[23] It was immediately after his campaign against Baha-u'd-din Gurshasp in the Deccan that he realized the urgent need of having a strong administrative centre in the South. The kingdom of Warangal could be dealt with from Daulatabad alone. According to Gardner Brown,[24] the centre of the

gravity of the empire had at that time shifted from the North to the South. The general impression that the sultan had transferred the capital to Daulatabad is not correct. Al-Qalqashandi is right in his observation that the empire of Delhi had two capitals—Delhi and Deogir.[25]

It may be indicated that Qutb-u'd-din Mubarak Khalji had given Devagiri the name Qutbabad, which Muhammad bin Tughluq re-christened as Daulatabad. But what was a mere formality with Mubarak became a geopolitical necessity for Muhammad bin Tughluq. In fact, Muhammad bin Tughluq had initiated an era of higher imperialism, and his ambition was to fill the vacuum in the political life of Central Asia caused by the decline of the Ilkhans. His Khorasan and Qarachil expeditions were to complete the chain of fortifications in the North. The army sent to Qarachil region was instructed to establish military posts all along the route. The army succeeded in occupying Jidya and the sultan sent a *qazi* and a *khatib*, signifying his decision to integrate the area with his territory. While the objectives of other sultans in founding new cities were local and economic, Muhammad bin Tughluq was thinking in a broader Asiatic context. He was anxious to create a chain of cities all over the frontiers of his Empire in order to achieve his political objectives.

If, on the one hand, Muhammad bin Tughluq's policy of creating strong and effective cities in the empire was guided by administrative and imperial considerations, religious and cultural factors led him to found a city in Awadh named as Saragdwari[26] (Gate to Paradise) for the Hindus.

Firuz Shah Tughluq's programmes of founding new cities went hand in hand with his plans of digging canals, channels and aqueducts. His cities consequently created prosperous conditions for the *raiyyat*. The Sayyid rulers were devoid of any higher ideals of city planning. The cities founded by them disappeared not long after they left the stages. Among the Lodi sultans, Sikandar Lodi looked upon cities as symbols of power and prestige. His decision to found the city of Agra was based on political and ethnic considerations. He destroyed cities and buildings—which included even Jaunpur for purely political reasons.

References

1. *Islamic Arts and Architecture*, pp. 95-96.
2. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, tr., p. 28.

3. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture*, p. 12.
4. Gordon Sanderson remarks that Aibek was anxious to raise buildings "as quickly as possible so that no time might be lost in making an impression on their newly conquered subjects", *Archaeological Survey of India Report*, 1912-13, pp. 120-31.
5. See Robert Hillenbrand's article "Some observations on the use of space in medieval Islamic Buildings" in *Islamic Architecture and Urbanism*, Damam, 1983, pp. 17-28.
6. Barani, p. 65.
7. Barani, p. 61.
8. *I'jaz-i-Khusrawi*, vol. I, p. 17.
9. Barani, p. 54.
10. Barani, p. 263.
11. *Archaeological Sur. India Rep., 1936-37*, p. 41.
12. Carr Stephen, *The Archaeology and Monumental Remains of Delhi*, pp. 84-85.
13. *Khaza'in-ul-Futuh*, English tr., pp. 14-20.
14. Ibid., pp. 18-19.
15. *Sirat*, p. 82.
16. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, tr., pp. 29-30.
17. MS. Personal Collection.
18. *Masalik-ul-Absar*, tr., pp. 18-19.
19. *Asar-us-Sanadid*, Karachi ed., pp. 111-12.
20. Ni'amat-ul-lah, *Makhzan*, p. 100.
21. A. Halim, *History of the Lodis of Delhi and Agra*, pp. 83-84, fn.
22. *Shah Wali-ul-lah kay Siyasi Maktubat*, 1st ed., p. 48.
23. See *Comprehensive History of India*, vol. V, Nizami's article on Muhammad bin Tughluq, pp. 491-514.
24. *Journal of U.P. Historical Society*, vol. I, pt. ii, p. 13.
25. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, tr., p. 30; *Masalik-ul-Absar*, p. 18.
26. *Cambridge History of India*, III, p. 154. 'Isami gives Sarkabari which is obviously a corruption of Saragdwari.

Chapter 16

Relations with the Hindus

No assessment of the relations of the Delhi sultans with the Hindus is possible without a clear perception of the motives of the Turkish campaigns of northern India. Often, the nature of these invasions is grossly misunderstood. Impelled by *lebensraum*, pushed by the Ghuzz and the Mongol invasions, attracted by the Indian wealth and anxious to hide their heads under safer climes they turned to India. Their wars were not religious wars. Qazi Abul Hasan Bulani, a contemporary saint of Mahmud of Ghaznin was not prepared to accept that Mahmud's Indian campaigns were in accordance with the *sunnah* of the Prophet.[1] The medieval historians inspired by the spirit of *fath namahs* (communiques of victory), highlight the religious factor and refer to the wars as *jihad*,[2] but the real nature of the conflict was entirely different. These wars were the result of purely territorial ambitions. The first power that the Ghurids overthrew in India was a remnant of the Ghaznavid dynasty. Then, in dealing with the Hindu rajas they followed a policy of political reconciliation and adjustment, rather than religious bigotry. After the conquest of Ajmer the territory was allowed to be governed by a son of Prithvi Raj[3] who was honoured by the grant of royal robes and *karamat*.[4] Edward Thomas had in his personal cabinet some unique silver and copper coins containing the word *Prithvi* on one side and *Sri Muhammad Sam* on the other,[5] indicating his acceptance of Mu'izz-u'd-din's suzerainty at some early stage. A near contemporary account, *Viruddhavidhi-Viddhavama* also says that Prithivraja was taken to Ajmer with a view to be reinstated on the throne.[6] Mu'izz-u'd-din raised the siege of Gwaliyar when Sallakshanapala acknowledged his suzerainty.[7] Aibek restored Anhilwara to its Hindu rulers.[8] Evidently conquest was followed by political alliances and administrative adjustments and not by any exuberance of religious fanaticism.

Theoretical Position of Hindus

The relations of the sultans of Delhi with the Hindus may be viewed

from two angles: theoretical and actual. The jurists of Islam have classified non-Muslims into three distinct categories:

Ahl-i-Kitab, people having a revealed book, like the Jews and the Christians;

Mushabih Ahl-i-Kitab, people resembling the *Ahl-i-Kitab*; and

Mushrikin, polytheists at war with the Muslims.

Once a people were declared as *Mushabih Ahl-i-Kitab*, relations with them were to be exactly the same as with the *Ahl-i-Kitab*. With polytheists (*mushrikin*) who did not submit to the Muslim state and continued at war with it, there was no obligation of any type.

The Arabs in Sind lost no time in declaring the Hindus as belonging to the category of *Mushabih Ahl-i-Kitab*. When they agreed to pay *jiziyah* they were guaranteed full protection; their houses of worship were safe and they were free to perform their religious rites and ceremonies without any let or hindrance.[9] The Brahmanabad Declaration of Muhammad bin Qasim which assured religious freedom and economic security[10] to the Hindus is a landmark in the history of medieval India. It was this religio-political decision taken by the Omayyad Government which served as a lodestar to the sultans of Delhi. They accepted this position and acted upon it all through the centuries. There were, however, men like Sayyid Nur-u'd-din Mubarak Ghaznawi[11] (at the court of Iltutmish) and Qazi Mughis[12] (at the court of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji) who wanted to place the Hindus in the third category. Barani was also one of them. But their views were rejected both by the sultans and the Muslim jurists. It is, however, strange that a position which had been very explicitly defined by the Arabs in Sind and was in conformity with the Hanafite law came up for discussion at the court of the Delhi sultans. Evidently it was due to feelings of rivalry and rancour against certain powerful sections of Hindu society, like the *khuts*, the *muqaddams* and the *chaudharis*. When the Muslim bureaucracy found their interests coming into clash with the interests of this group which controlled the entire agrarian economy, they initiated such discussions to push them down in public esteem and create an atmosphere of antipathy towards them. The tenor of discussions betrays the motives behind them. Such discussions failed not only to enlist general Muslim support but the approval of the sultans also. The jurists of the Shafi'i school, it appears, did not believe in extending the status of *Ahl-i-Kitab* to the Hindus and confined the application of this principle to Jews and Christians alone. No work of the sultanate period has survived elucidating the generally accepted position, but in the eighteenth century a great Naqshbandi

saint of Delhi, Mirza Mazhar Jan-i-Janan, declared Vedas as a revealed book and justified the status of *Ahl-i-Kitab* for the Hindus.[13]

The Jiziyah

The nature of *jiziyah* and the position of *zimmis* also needs some elucidation. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad emphatically remarks that it was sheer ignorance that the status of *zimmis* came to be regarded as derogatory. "Had the '*ulama* of those times", remarks the Maulana, "explained its exact nature in the light of the *shari'at* laws, the Hindus would have appreciated that there was no humiliation associated with it. It was the fairest treatment that a ruling people could accord to their subjects."[14]

Jiziyah is an Arabicized form of the Persian tax *qazit* which was levied in Sassanid Persia.[15] Nawsherwan had formulated rules for its realization. Taxes of this nature were realized in the Byzantine Empire also. In India, a tax known as *Turushkidanda*[16] was levied by the rajas. According to Todd, Rajput states realized also a tax at the rate of one rupee per head.[17] Dr. R.P. Tripathi is of the opinion that a tax of more or less the same type was realized in France as Host Tax, in Germany as Common Peny, and in England as Scoutage.[18]

It appears that those who paid the *jiziyah* were exempt from military service. There were certain taxes which were paid by the Muslims alone—Hindus being exempt from them e.g. *zakat* and *sadaqat*. So it may not be correct to say that it placed an additional financial burden on the Hindus.

Fakhr-i-Mudabbir thus states the position with reference to the *shari'at* law:

> "If the Muslims go to some *dar-ul-harb* and besiege some fort, they should first invite them to embrace the faith. If they accept it, the Mussalmans should stop themselves from conflict; if they refuse (to accept the faith) they should be asked to pay the *jiziyah*. If they agree to pay the *jiziyah*, hostilities should cease forthwith because *after accepting jiziyah the blood and property of the non-Muslims becomes like the blood and the property of the Muslims.*"[19]

This echoes the Brahmanabad Declaration of Muhammad bin Qasim and gives a very clear idea of the lines on which the policy of the Delhi sultans was based.

During the sultanate period of the word *jiziyah* and *kharaj* are sometimes used as synonymous terms. Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya once mentioned the story of a *durwesh* who lived in a village near

Lahore, and used to cultivate land. A revenue collector demanded from him state share for the past years and said: "Either give the *jiziyah* for previous years or show some miracle to me."[20]

The realization of *jiziyah* in India required an elaborate administrative machinery to collect it. We find no reference to any such machinery during the sultanate period. However, it appears from the *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi* that the sultan had issued orders that *jiziyah* be not realized from those who had accepted Islam.[21] Does it mean that *jiziyah* had become so indistinguishable that it continued to be realized after conversion also? 'Abd-ul-Hamid Muharrir Ghaznavi has discussed *jiziyah* under *Kharaj-i-Muqasamah*, as a fixed annual sum payable without regard to the variations of prosperity and harvest.[22] Perhaps the tax during the time of Firuz was so mixed up with the total incidence of taxation that it could not be distinguished. We are informed by 'Afif that when Firuz realized *jiziyah* from the Brahmans, there was lot of commotion in Delhi.[23] They claimed that never before any ruler had demanded *jiziyah* from them.[24] The Brahmans went on hunger strike and threatened to immolate themselves if the tax was not remitted. It appears that the problem had assumed such proportions that the issue had to be discussed with the jurists.[25] Eventually the problem was solved by a reduction in the amount of *jiziyah* by the sultan and by the Hindu public offering to pay *jiziyah* on behalf of the Brahmans.[26]

It is evident from the medieval records that the Hindus enjoyed full religious freedom during the sultanate period. They could freely bow before their idols and blow their conches in the imperial city of Delhi. They had permission to repair their old temples, but could only build new temples away from the Muslim inhabited areas. This position is clearly stated in *Fatawa-i-Firuz Shahi* as a juristic decision.[27] Freedom to worship the idols and blow the *sankh* and *dhol* was given by Sultan Mahmud to his Hindu residents of Ghaznin.[28] The Hindus in Delhi passed by the royal palace blowing their conches and prayed before their idols on the banks of the Jumna.[29] Barani remarks:

> "... The Muslim kings ... permit that in their capital (Delhi) and in the cities of the Mussalmans the customs of infidelity are openly practised, idols are publicly worshipped and the traditions of infidelity are adhered to with greater insistence than before. Openly and without fear, the infidels continue the teaching of the principles of their false creed: they also adorn their idols and celebrate their rejoicings during their festivals with the beat of drums and *dhols* and with singing and dancing. By merely paying a few *tankas* and the poll tax (*jiziya*) they are able to

> continue the traditions of infidelity by giving lessons in the books of their false faith and enforcing the orders of these books...."

He again protests:

> "... Muslim kings not only allow but are pleased with the fact that infidels, polytheists, idol-worshippers and cow-dung (*sargin*) worshippers build houses like palaces, wear clothes of brocade and ride Arab horses caparisoned with gold and silver ornaments. They are equipped with a hundred thousand sources of strength. They live in delights and comforts. They take Musalmans into their service and make them run before their horses: the poor Musalmans beg of them at their doors; and in the capital of Islam, owing to which the edifice of Islam is elevated, they are called *rais, ranas, thakurs, sahas, mehtas* and *pandits*."[30]

Barani's rigid and fanatical thinking apart, his account gives a very clear idea of the social, political and economic status enjoyed by the Hindus under the sultans.

When Malik Ahmad Chap, a young Khalji Malik anxious to consoldiate the position of the oligarchy, pressurised Jalal-u'd-din Khalji to oust Hindus from positions of authority and play the role of an orthodox religious king, he told him that it was beyond the pale of practical politics to assume that role. He pointed out that every day he saw Hindus pass by his palace beating their drums and blowing their conches. "They come to the Jumna, worship their idols and practise customs of polytheism and heresy",[31] said Jalal-u'd-din and expressed his helplessness to do anything in the matter. Barani might have disliked all such freedom to Hindus, but Amir Khusrau appreciated the practice of the Brahmans to bathe in the Jumna in the small hours of the morning.[32]

It is said that real tolerance is that of a spiritually powerful person who while jealous of the frontiers of his own faith, can appreciate other modes of thought and behaviour.[33] This applies to Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq who was very strict and punctual in the performance of his religious duties. He had a world view of Islam and was influenced by the ideology of Ibn Taimiyya in his dealings with the non-Muslims.[34] He had close contact with the Hindu *jogis* with whom he used to discuss Hindu religious concepts. Influenced by their views,[35] he named a town as Saragdwari (Gate to Heaven).[36] He used to participate in Hindu festivals, like Holi.[37] Ganges water was taken for him to Daulatabad through post[38] which was organized on very effective lines. The sultan was interested in the Sanskrit language also.[39] His court had a vast assemblage of one thousand poets of Arabic,

Persian and Hindi.[40] He spared the Jawalamukhi,[41] an ancient temple. A Portuguese writer of the fifteenth century informs us that during his Gujarat campaign the sultan had built a temple there.[42] On festive occasions both Hindus and Muslims came to the palace.[43]

Hindu Masons

The sultans of Delhi undertook extensive programmes of constructing palaces, minarets, mosques and *madrasahs* which could be completed only with the help of Hindu masons and architects. The way Hindu architects combined Hindu and Islamic architectural traditions was strikingly original. They used the material of Hindu buildings in constructing Muslim monuments, according to Muslim social and religious requirements. There is no doubt that Hindu masons were involved in the construction of Iltutmish's buildings in Delhi and Ajmer. Inscriptions clearly show that the repair of Qutb Minar at different times was carried out by Hindu masons.[44] In 1369, when the Qutb Minar was damaged by lightning, Firuz Shah Tughluq entrusted the repair to four Hindu experts Nana, Salha, Lola and Lachmann.[45] It is amazing that in these inscriptions the Hindu deities, like Visakarma (the Divine Architect) and Ganapati (Lord of Gana), have been praised and *Om* and *Svasti* have been invoked.[46] An inscription of Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq's period put up on a step-well constructed by Nanak, son of Jagbir, refers to the sultan as "*Khusrau-u'd-din-nawaz Tughluq Shah*" (Religion-cherishing monarch Tughluq Shah).[47] A mosque constructed in Gujarat during the time of Firuz Shah Tughluq gives the name of Banthar son of Jhagan (?Chhagan) as the stone-cutter involved in the work.[48] Hindu masons who were employed at the Atala mosque put up a Nagari inscription there.[49] Examples of this nature may be multiplied.

The Indian stone cutters and masons who were mostly Hindus, impressed Timur so much that he took with him thousands of craftsmen to construct his buildings in Samarqand.[50] A century and a quarter later when Babur came to India he was struck by the abundance of builders, workers and artisans in India.[51]

Hindu religious architecture also was not neglected. It was during the time of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji that Thakur Phero wrote his book, *Vastosara*,[52] on temple architecture. He refers therein to twenty-five types of temples. Such a work could be undertaken only when temples were being constructed. Nowhere in the book is there any hint or suggestion that there were any restrictions on the construction of temples.

Hindu Influence on Currency

The coins of the sultans were minted by the Hindu mintsmen.[53] Significantly enough, not only did the Sanskrit inscriptions appear on the coins, but also the Hindu gods and goddesses are also presented on them. The gold coin issued by Shihab-u'd-din Muhammad Ghuri contains the representation of the goddess Lakshmi on it.[54]

Hindus in Administration

It was not possible for a foreign government to exclude Indians from all posts of administration. In fact, the agrarian administration could not be managed by anyone except the Hindus who had first hand knowledge of the rural areas and knew the psychology of the Indian peasant. And the economy of the sultanate depended on the revenues realized from the peasants. Naturally therefore the class which dealt directly with the peasants—the *khuts*, *muqaddams* and *chaudharis*—came to enjoy great power and prestige, something which was gall and wormwood to the Turkish aristocracy. While in cities, the number of Hindu officers could be restricted, there was no option in the rural areas. However, in course of time Hindus also came to hold high offices in the urban administration also. During the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq, Ratan, a Hindu, was appointed to the governorship of Sind and was permitted to use '*alam* and *naubat*, a privilege of the high *amirs* only.[55] The fort of Gulbarga was put under the charge of Bhiran Rai.[56] In Deogir Dhara Dhar was made *naib wazir* and superintendent of *Diwan-i-Uslub*.[57] Earlier, during the time of the Khaljis also Hindu officers had held effective positions. Brinj Tan was kotwal of Delhi under Jala-u'd-din Khalji; Hatya Paik was another important figure of his time.[58]

Hindu participation in the army goes back to the days of Sultan Mahmud of Ghaznin. Three important Hindu generals—Tilak, Sondi Rai Hindu and Hajrai—served in the Ghaznavid army.[59] During the time of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji Hindus participated in the Deccan campaigns. The rise of Baradu during the time of Mubarak Khalji and subsequent hold of Khusrau Khan on the administrative machinery show that Hindu officers held influential posts on such a large scale that they could effect a *coup*. Ibn Battuta refers to a town near Ajodhan where both Hindu and Muslim soldiers went to quell a Hindu insurrection.[60] There are innumerable instances of Hindu soldiers fighting with the enemies of the sultans side by side with the Turkish warriors.

Hindu Ladies in the Haram

The induction of the Hindu ladies into the seraglio began very early, the main consideration being either political or to establish matrimonial contact and win confidence of the people through matrimonial alliances. Muhammad bin Qasim is reported to have married Lodi, a wife of Raja Dahir.[61] Mangbarni married a Khokar princess.[62] 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji married Kamala Devi of Gujarat. Her daughter Dewal Devi was married to Khizr Khan. According to 'Afif, Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq wanted to marry Rajab in the family of the Rai of Dipalpur, but later married the daughter of Rana Mall Bhatti of Abuhar. Firuz Shah Tughluq had a Gujari queen. These ladies of the *haram* determined the tone of the palace life and many Indian customs became popular, as one finds at the time of Khizr Khan's marriage with Dewal Rani. According to Dr. Mahdi Husain, Firuz built zigzag passages known as *bhulbhulliyan* in his palace "in order to please his Gujari queen and to suit the sportive native taste of high-class Indian ladies".[63]

Economic Position of the Hindus

As hinted at earlier, the rural areas were largely managed by the *khuts*, *muqaddams* and *chaudharis*, and in that capacity they exercised great authority. They lived under affluent circumstances with plenty of corn, large number of cattle and horses.[64] 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji, who wanted to bring about a coordination in the rural and the urban economies, was concerned about their contumacious activities. He was not worried about Hindus being a religious group, but Hindu intermediaries who stood between the state and the peasant and exploited both. 'Ala-u'd-din's stern dealings with *khuts*, *muqaddams* and *chaudharis* were dictated by economic considerations.[65] Dr. R.P. Tripathi has rightly pointed out that since he had not spared the Muslims and had extracted wealth from them, he could not spare the Hindus also.[66]

The Hindu traders also were prosperous and carried on business on an extensive scale. The Multani merchants, contemptuously called *Multani bachchas*[67] by Barani, were so rich and prosperous that they advanced money to the Muslim nobles.[68] Barani writes: "The extraordinary wealth which the Multanis and Hindu bankers (*sahus*) possess has come from the wealth of the *maliks* and *amirs* of the empire of Delhi. They (the Muslim nobility) borrowed from the Multanis and Hindu bankers up to the utmost limit and then repaid the loans of their creditors along with interest."[69]

The higher class of Hindus known as *rajas, thakkurs, ranas, sahus, mehtas* and *pandits* enjoyed positions of respect in Delhi society. They lived in big houses and employed Muslim servants.[70]

Interest in Hindu Sciences

The Arabs were great admirers of Hindu achievements in the realm of mathematics, philosophy, medicine and astronomy. Shahrastani thought that the Arabs and the people of Hindustan were "religiously near each other".[71] It was *Brahmasiddhanta* (Arabic name *al-Sind-Hind*) which attracted Arabs to Hindu achievements in the sphere of astronomy.[72] Ibn Sina learnt Indian arithmetic from a grocer who was an expert in the subject.[73]

Alberuni's interest in acquiring direct knowledge of Hindu sciences was unique, but some interest in Hindu sciences continued later on also. Amir Khusrau claims to have acquired mastery in some Hindu Sciences.[74] We find Hindu religious men (*jogis* and others) discussing religious problems in the *khanqahs* of Shaikh Farid Ganj-i-Shakar and Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, Sayyid Muhammad Gisu Daraz of Gulbarga and the court of Muhammad bin Tughluq. During the sultanate period, it was mostly astronomy and astrology which attracted the attention of Muslims at all levels, from royalty to *raiyyat*. Hindu astrologers were in great demand during the sultanate period.

Sultan Firuz Shah's academic interests brought him close to Hindu scholarship. He used to discuss problems relating to astrology and astronomy with the Hindu astrologers.[75] He got a Sanskrit work on astrology translated by 'Izz-u'd-din Khalid Khani, named as *Dala'il-i Firuz Shahi*, and rewarded him generously.[76] The sultan also got translated into Persian *Barahi Sankhata*, one of the classical Hindu books on astrology.[77] Its translations are available under different titles—*Tarjuma Barahi* (Aligarh, Cat: 1111-1112, no. 1997), *Kitab al-Nujum* (Aligarh Sir Shah Sulaiman Collection, no. 526). It was translated into Persian by 'Abd-ul-'Aziz Shams Thanesari.

Amir Khusrau's *Nuh Sipihr*, presented to Mubarak Khalji, reflects the attitude of royalty towards the Hindu sciences, culture, traditions, languages and religious beliefs. He tries to prove India's superiority in every respect over the countries of the *Bala* (Central Asia and Persia), particularly in knowledge and learning. He refers particularly to physics, mathematics, astronomy, metaphysics and divinity. He mentions ten points to establish the superiority of the Indians:

1. Learning is widespread among them.
2. They can speak all the languages of the world.
3. Scholars have come from different parts of the world to study in India, but no Indian scholar has found it necessary to go abroad to acquire knowledge.
4. The numerical system, specially the symbol zero, originated in India. The word *hindsa* is compound of *hind* (India) and *asa* (a famous Indian mathematician).
5. *Kalila wa Dimna* was written in India.
6. Game of chess was invented in India.
7. Chess and *Kalila wa Dimna* are Indian contributions to world culture.
8. Indian music is of a higher order than the music of any other country in the world.
9. Animals also are charmed by the Indian music.
10. No land possesses a poet of Khusrau's talent.[78]

Nuh Sipihr brings out very clearly the fact that the royalty had started looking upon Indian cultural heritage and intellectual achievements as part of their own historic self.

Destruction of Temples

Barring the destruction of the houses of worship during the time of war which was an established practice of medieval warfare, the temples were generally protected during the sultanate period.[79] A fragmentary inscription found in the Purana Qila and written in Persian and Sanskrit records the endowment of twelve *bighas* of land to a temple erected and dedicated to Sri Krishna.[80] Sikandar Lodi whose attitude towards Hindu religious practices was far from liberal or tolerant wanted to destroy a Hindu temple. An '*alim* clearly told the sultan that destruction of temples in peace time was not permitted by the Islamic *shari'at*.[81]

Firuz Shah destroyed some centres of Hindu ceremonial activities, at Swalehpur and Guhana. In Mulwah there was a pond where Hindus and Muslims both congregated. A temple also had appeared by the side of the pond. Firuz Shah thus explains the circumstances in which he was obliged to take that action:

> "In the village of Maluh, there was a tank called *kund* where they had built idol-temples. A body of Hindus, following each other's example, along with their retinues armed and mounted on caparisoned horses and with their women and children in palanquins and chariots, assembled in

> thousands and worshipped the idols.... Prompted by base desires, some irreligious Mussalmans also joined the gathering...."[82]

Dr. Ishwar Topa thinks that these newly built temples were "a menace to public morality".[83]

Conversions

Conversions to Islam took place mostly at the personal, tribal or professional levels in which the state had very little role to play. There is no evidence to show that any state machinery worked to convert people to Islam. Except a remark on entering the palace, no distinction seems to have been made between the Hindus and the Muslims as such. When a Muslim noble entered the palace, the guards cried out *Bismillah* (in the name of Allah) and when a Hindu came they shouted *Haddak Allah* (May Allah guide you). Firuz Shah Tughluq was perhaps the first and the only sultan of Delhi who invited Hindus to his religion. He writes:

> "...I received the strength (from God) to induce the *zimmis* to embrace the True Faith by proclaiming that any infidel who repeated the *kalima* and accepted Islam would according to the doctrines of the faith of the holy Apostle ... be exempted from the payment of the *jiziya*. When this announcement reached the ears of the people, crowds of Hindus came and were ennobled with the honour of Islam. This is going on till the present day; they come from all sides and, on adopting the Faith, are freed from the obligation of paying the *jiziya* and are distinguished with grants of rewards and robes."[84]

Maybe that this passage appeared in the details of his achievements which Firuz had sent to the caliph when he had granted a *manshur* to Muhammad Shah Bahman and Firuz had protested against it highlighting his own contribution to the expansion of Islam in India.

The *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* says: "Due to special attention of the king, Islam spread throughout the country rapidly, and thousands and thousands of infidels not only embraced Islam, but were adorned with admirable morals and admirable character and destitution was also wiped off altogether from amongst the people."[85] But there is nothing in contemporary records to support or substantiate this statement which is more in the spirit of medieval *Fath Namahs* than actual facts of history.

Opposition to Pantheistic Trends

Pantheism is the essence of higher religious thought. The Upanishads

propound it and the Muslim mystics, particularly Ibn 'Arabi, have considered it a *sine qua non* for gnosis (*ma'rifat*). But the moment it percolates to the illiterate masses it leads to moral holiday, demolishes the frontiers of each faith and creates intellectual and social chaos. Referring to its impact on Hindu behaviour Dr. S. Radhakrishnan says: "The *Upanishads* no doubt shattered the authority of these gods in the world of thought, but did not disturb their sway in the world of practice."[86] Muslim spiritual life was based on pantheistic ideas but the mystic teachers confined its teaching to the higher category of disciples. If it percolated to the illiterate it led to cries of *Anal Haqq* (I am God. I am the Truth). Firuz checked the infiltration of such pantheistic trends both among the Muslims and the Hindus. The punishments given to Nawahun, the Hindu *darogha* of Uchch, Ahmad Bihari, Mas'ud Bak and Rukn-u'd-din should be viewed in the light of Firuz Shah's anxiety to check the intellectual anarchy that cries of *Anal Haqq* could create.[87]

It may however be noted that these pantheistic ideas had to be chiselled further to provide *elan* to the Bhakti movement in the following decades.

Hindu Opinion of Muslim Rulers

Epigraphic and recorded evidence gives us some idea of the Hindu opinion of the sultans of Delhi. The Hindus, it appears, appreciated the efforts of the sultans to ensure peace and plenty. The Palam inscription dated VS 1333 corresponding to AD 1276 throws light on Hindu views about Balban. The inscription which begins with invocations to Ganapati and Siva, refers to Balban as *nayaka* and *hammira* whose soldiers battled daily at the mouths of the Ganges and the Indus.[88] It says that during the reign of Balban, people are happy and prosperous from Gaur to Ghaznin and from Varvida to Rameshwaram. "He bestows such care on his subjects that Vishnu is freed from worries now and enjoys rest."

Muhammad bin Tughluq was also held in high esteem by the Hindus. Sanskrit works and inscriptions pay eloquent tribute to him. Vidayapati Thakkur speaks highly about him in *Purusa Parshika*.[89] A Sanskrit inscription of 1384 Vikarami corresponding to AD 1327, preserved in the Archaeological Survey of India, compares the sultan to *Saka* and considers him like a jewel among the rulers of the world. This inscription was put on a well in Delhi by a Brahman named Sridhara.[90]

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Chapter 17

On the Battlefields

The sultans of Delhi had to organize three types of military operations—offensive, defensive and administrative. It was the nature of confrontation and conflict which determined the strength of army and the mobilization of resources. It was considered below the dignity of a ruler to march in person to quell a rebellion.[1] Balban marched against Tughrul only when his forces failed to achieve the objective. 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji's generals conquered Gujarat and the Deccan, while the emperor watched their performance from Delhi. But a Mongol invasion needed personal and intensive defensive planning by the sultan himself, who moved out after making arrangements for his *haram* and his treasury.[2] Circumstances forced Muhammed bin Tughluq to march in person from one corner of the country to another, quelling rebellions, punishing the mischief mongers and increasing the morale of the army.

A *roi faineant* could not survive during the medieval period. He had to be active, assertive and aggressive; otherwise he could be overthrown any moment. Conquest of new areas, control of turbulent neighbours and suppression of contumacious elements within the territory, needed massive display of force. The success of the campaigns of Shihab-u'd-din and Aibek was due mainly to their confidence inspring presence on the battlefields. There were many ups and downs but their dogged tenacity of purpose and ruthless pursuit of objectives ultimately succeeded in overthrowing Rajput princes one after the other.

Sultan Qutb-u'd-din Aibek overran the whole of northern India from the Indus to the Ganges and from the Himalayas down to the Vindhya range. It was a remarkable military achievement made possible by his tenacity of purpose, careful planning and conspicuous military leadership. He conquered bit by bit areas which were later consolidated into an Empire by Iltutmish.

Iltutmish was a military leader par excellence. The hoofs of the horses of his army, says Amir Khusrau, raised dust from Malwa to Sind.[3] His martial vigour, dash and courage justified his title, *Iltutmish* (world conqueror).

The military operations of a weak and the vacillating ruler were always open to risks and hazards. When Rukn-u'd-din Firuz led his forces towards Kuhram[4], the Turkish *amirs* and the royal bodyguard at the centre rebelled. The ringleaders in this insurrection were Malik Ikhtiyar-u'd-din Yazbak-i Tughrul Khan and Malik 'Izz-u'd-din Balbani Kishlu Khan, leaders of the Turkish group which opposed the induction of non-Turkish elements in the army. A sultan had therefore to keep in view the racial composition and character of his armies during the campaigns. Leaving the capital under the charge of some noble of confidence and vision was a problem which was sorted out before any sultan started on a military campaign. Balban was particularly cautious about this arrangement.

When Raziya rose against Turkan Khatun and appealed to the Friday congregation to help her against the machination of the sultan and his mother, the Turkish *amirs* and the centre contingents of body-guards played a decisive role. They supported Raziya and decided to place her on the throne.[5] She rose to the occasion and displayed remarkable courage in different encounters. She appeared on the battlefields in male attire with *kulah* on her head and *qaba* on her body, seated on elephant.[6] Raziya's performance on the battlefield and her careful diplomatic handling of the Turkish and the non-Turkish elements in the body politic were remarkable but betrayal and faithlessness of the nobility upset chances of her survival.

Rebellion of Tughrul

When Balban ascended the throne he had vast military experience to his credit. He dealt with the contumacious elements with barbaric harshness and struck awe and terror into the hearts of the people. In 1279, a Turkish slave of the sultan, Tughrul, governor of Lakhnauti, rebelled, assumed a canopy of state and caused his name to be read in the *khutba* and got it inscribed on the coins also. When the two armies sent by Balban to punish the rebel failed, he decided to march in person. He ordered the construction of large number of boats on the Jumna and the Ganges and directed Bughra Khan to accompany him. Ignoring the rainy season and by forced marches Balban reached Lakhnauti. Tughrul gathered his forces and planned to move to Jajnagar. Balban entrusted Lakhnauti to the charge of Sipahsalar Husam-u'd-din and other officers among whom was the grandfather of Barani and himself marched towards Jajnagar. Malik Barbak Bek Barlas marched ahead ten or twelve kos in advance of the army with seventy or eighty horses. Tughrul was

not traceable. Malik Muhammad Sher Andaz who was going ahead with thirty horsemen, came upon a group of corn dealers. They pretended to be ignorant about the whereabouts of Tughrul. When heads of two of them were mercilessly chopped off by Malik Sher Andaz, they divulged the secret movements of Tughrul. When the contingent suddenly reached the place, Tughrul slipped out of the bathroom. He was, however, caught and killed. His head was brought to Balban who did not like the rashness of Sher Andaz and his brother in killing Tughrul. Perhaps he wanted to make an example of punishment and torture. The sultan ordered gibbets to be erected on each side of the market for more than two miles in length and impaled upon them supporters of Tughrul. When Balban reached Delhi he was welcomed by the people. He ordered stakes to be erected in the market of the city and the captives of Tughrul's army and others who had betrayed were ordered to be impaled. As many of them were relatives of people in Delhi, public lamentations and wailings filled the atmosphere. The *qazi* of the army made a mercy apeal to the sultan. The sultan accepted his plea and forgave them.[7] The memory of this campaign of Balban could not be forgotten by people for long.

Campaigns against Mongols

Once the Turkish hold over the country was established, it were neither the Rajputs nor the rebellious governors who posed the most serious threat to their authority. The Mongols appeared like a hurricane, devastated, plundered and massacred the people and left only smoke and flames behind.

The early Turkish sultans had to station their crack forces in the frontier region and, as was inevitable under the circumstances, the commander of forces in the north-western frontier came to be the most powerful functionary in the empire. In fact, wardenship of the marshes became a stepping stone of kingship. Though Balban had turned all the resources of the Empire to the protection of his frontiers, the death of Prince Muhammad at the hands of the Mongols revealed the magnitude of the problems. 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji did not pay any special attention to the Mongols in the beginning but when they began to knock at the gates of Delhi and invaded the suburbs of the capital, he rose to the occasion and effectively planned his defensive policy against Mongol incursions. How people from suburbs flocked to the *khanqahs*, particularly to the *Jama'at khanah* of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, may be read in his *malfuzat*. He had to ask people who came from

distant places to meet him, to return to their homes as the crowd of people assembling in the *khanqah* was becoming unmanageable.[8]

'Ala-u'd-din had to face two major Mongol invasions—led by Qutlugh Khwaja and Taghi. It was in 696/1296 that Qutlugh Khwaja set out from Transoxiana with great preparations to invade India. Crossing the river Sind he proceeded towards Delhi and in order to avoid consternation and panic did not plunder any town or village on the way. The news of the invasion completely upset life in Delhi, commodities became scare and prices shot up. "All the people of the suburbs of Delhi", observes Barani, "were brought in the fort of Delhi as the old fort had not yet been constructed. Such fear and terror had not been experienced nor heard by the people before. All the people, young and old were confounded, and there was such a huge concourse of people that even the lanes, markets and mosques could not accommodate them. All the commodities in the city became dear, the trading routes were blocked and the condition of the people became miserable."[9]

'Ala-u'd-din came out of the city and pitched his camp at Siri. He entrusted the city, the *haram* and the treasury to 'Ala-ul-Mulk, the kotwal of Delhi. The reports of the march of one lac Mongol horsemen created despair and distress in the hearts of the *maliks* and nobles. 'Ala-ul-Mulk's tacit suggestion to avoid war, obviously by purchasing peace, was turned down by 'Ala-u'd-din. He remarked: "If I do as you have suggested, how could I expose myself before others? How shall I go to the *haram*? What the people of the country would think of me and how the stubborn and daring rebels bow before me?" In the conflict with Qutlugh Khwaja, Zafar Khan displayed extraordinary courage and bravery. It is said that Qutlugh was so deeply impressed by the courage of Zafar Khan that he sent a message to him to come to his side and accept higher position than what he enjoyed in Delhi. Zafar Khan's charge terrified the Mongols who turned back and left the country. Barani says that after that no other army in such large numbers invaded Delhi. Zafar Khan's courage had so unnerved the Mongols that if their beasts did not drink water they would say: "Have you seen Zafar Khan that you are not drinking water?"[10]

'Ala-u'd-din's bold and fearless resistance of Qutlugh Khwaja immensely raised his prestige and the sultan came to be looked upon as a protector against Mongol cataclysm.

Another Mongol incursion in the country was led by Targhi who took advantage of 'Ala-u'd-din's involvement in the Chittor campaign.

Besides, the army of the sultan was at that time busy in Warangal operations. Targhi came like a cyclone and encamped on the banks of the Jumna and blockaded all the public roads. The armies of the sultanate summoned from different areas could not proceed beyond Koil and Baran, as the roads were blockaded. 'Ala-u'd-din came out of the city and encamped at Siri. A ditch was dug round the camp. The doors of houses were pulled down and used for constructing walls of defence, and check the entry of the Mongols. In each entrenchment five armoured elephants were stationed. This line of defence proved very effective. The Mongols tried to break it but did not succeed. Barani has remarked that had Targhi stayed a month more, Delhi would have fallen.

Targhi's invasion created such conditions of fear and panic that it was not possible to carry out fodder, water or wood. The grain merchants were held off. The Mongol horsemen overran Chabutra-i-Subhani, Hauz-i-Sultani etc. and began to sell out the grain of the royal granaries at low price. Despite his efforts Targhi could not make a dent in the defence line and after two months' stay in India returned to his country.

It was after Targhi's invasion that 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji formulated an elaborate policy of defence against the Mongols. He gave up conquest of distant areas which meant absence of forces from Delhi for long periods. He built the city of Siri and garrisoned it effectively. Orders were issued for repair and reconstruction of old forts. New forts were constructed along the route to Delhi and experienced *kotwals* were stationed there. *Manjaniq* and '*arradah* (cranes and carts) were constructed to throw stone balls containing Greek fire or naptha and weapons were supplied to all forts. Sufficient stock of grain and fodder was kept in the forts. Besides, the *iqta's* or governorships falling on the route of the Mongols were assigned to experienced and powerful *amirs*.[11]

'Ala-u'd-din's Deccan Campaign

After establishing his hold over the north 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji turned to the Deccan. With him begins what may be called the "Era of Imperialism" in the history of Delhi sultanate. He was anxious to emulate Alexander as world conqueror.[12] It may however be pointed out that Alexander's image as the conqueror of India loomed large from the time of Iltutmish[13], who was called *Iskandar al-Sani*.[14]

'Ala-u'd-din had established his military reputation by his resolute and aggressive planning of campaigns against the Mongols. Later on, his

generals like Malik Kafur, carried his banners confidently to the heart of the south. The conquest of South India during the time of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji was entirely the work of his generals.

Military Campaigns of Muhammad bin Tughluq

Perhpas no sultan of Delhi personally led so many campaigns and covered so many thousands of miles of area in total military alertness as Muhammad bin Tughluq. His was an age of higher imperialism when he was anxious to conquer lands beyond the Indian frontiers. International military cooperation, anxiety to complete the conquest of the Indian subcontinent and desire to fortify frontiers of India, guided his military strategy and activity. There is melancholic remembrance of a hectic life spent on the battlefield in the few verses composed by him when on the door of death:[15]

"We strutted about this world a good deal;
we indulged in luxuries.
"We rode many high-stature horses;
we brought many highly prized Turkish slaves.
"We had many joys; till, at last,
we sank and became hump-backed like the new moon."

The author of *Subh-ul-A'sha* has described the sultan's place in the disposition of the army on the battlefield. "During the war", he writes, "he rides with seven *chatrs* over his head and the arrangement in war, according to Siraj-u'd-din al-Hindi, is that the sultan stands in the centre (of the army) and the *imams* and *'ulama* surrounded him while the archers stand before and behind him. . . . In front of him there are elephants covered with iron harnesses and on them are towers in which the fighters are hidden. In these towers are holes for shooting arrows and throwing naptha-bottles. In front of the elephants march the slaves in light dress wearing shields and weapons. They hold the ropes of the elephants while the horses are on their right and left in order to draw together the flanks of the army in front of and behind the elephants so that not one of them can run away."[16]

March of huge armies led by the sultan himself created a number of problems of commissariat, conveyance, transport and security. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir writes about Aibek: "In spite of the large number of troops gathered round his banner—consisting of Turks, Ghuris, Khurasanis, Khaljis and Hindustanis, no one dare take by force a blade of grass, or a morsel of bread, a goat from the fold or a bird from the nest or to lodge with a peasant."[17] This was done as much out of humanitarian

considerations as the need to win the golden opinion of people en route the battlefield.

Of the sultans of Delhi, it was perhaps Muhammad bin Tughluq who had to face the largest number of rebellions and had to be in the battlefield for several years continuously. His last campaign was that of Gujarat. He left the capital in January 1345 and facing the rebels in Gujarat, died in Sind in March 1351. It was perhaps the longest military operation undertaken by any sultan. Tughi's rebellion in Gujarat forced the sultan to leave his task of dealing with Jamma-i-Sadat in the Deccan unfinished. The sultan was obviously upset at this upsurge of rebellions. He sought Barani's advice on the situation. Barani suggested that in the past rulers had abdicated under such circumstances. Muhammad bin Tughluq's resolute and firm nature refused to accept the advice and said that he would teach people obedience and submission by punishment.

Tughi fled from one place to another, eluding the sultan and his officers. From Broach to Cambay, from Cambay to Aswal, from there to Patan. At Kadi the sultan overtook him and defeated him but he fled to Patan and then escaped to Girnar, and ultimately sought shelter with the Sammas of Thatta. During this period Muhammad bin Tughluq fell ill. He recovered but fell ill again. He fasted on the 10th of Muharram and broke his fast with fish. This aggravated his illness as fish did not agree with him. He, however, continued his journey on the river for two continuous days. His illness increased and he breathed his last at a village, called Sondh, after a week's serious illness.

The Battle of Panipat

In the history of the Delhi Sultanate the battle of Panipat which sounded the death knell of the sultanate and paved way for the rise of the Mughal Empire is remarkable in certain respects.

Ibrahim Lodi's brave confrontation of Babur's army at the battlefield of Panipat reveals some of his extraordinary qualities of head and heart. After some initial skirmishes in which the performance of his army was not satisfactory, Ibrahim marched against the Mughals on Tuesday 8, 1526, April 21, 1526, with an army "strong as the brazen rampart of Sikandar" and "clad in iron armour".[8] His army consisted of about a lac soldiers and one thousand elephants.[9] He distributed all the jewellery and treasure among his nobles and soldiers and addressed them thus:

> "Comrades! Tomorrow is the day when we shall be engaged in a contest against the Mughals. If we are victorious I shall try to satisfy you by

> rewards), and if it happens otherwise, you should be reconciled to me for what I am doing now."[20]

The disposition of Babur's forces has been described in *Babur Namah* and other works. Ibrahim fought heroically and with cool determination. Mughal artillery created confusion in Afghan ranks, particularly when the elephants rushed back. Some fifteen to sixteen thousand soldiers of Ibrahim were killed on the battlefield. Several thousand soldiers died with him. Babur sent Dilawar Khan to find out the body of Ibrahim. It was found in the heap of dead bodies under two cubits of blood and dust, with his crown fallen off from his head. At Babur's order the body was buried at the place where it was found. When Ibrahim's head was brought before Babur, he exclaimed: "Praised be thy heroism".[21] It is said that the place where the battle was fought struck such terror in the hearts of the people that for long they could not move about in that area.[22]

Rebellions

In the eyes of a despot no crime was more heinous than rebellion. The court chroniclers present rebellion as sin (*'isyan)* and the rebel as *'asi* (sinner). The entire state machinery came into action if there was any indication of rebellion anywhere. To mobilize public opinion in favour of rebellion was very difficult for fear of retribution and punishment. The only ruler of the Sultanate period against whom efforts were made to justify rebellion was Muhammad bin Tughluq. 'Isami justifies the rebellion of his patron, the founder of the Bahmanid dynasty, against Muhammad bin Tughluq on two grounds: he killed guiltyless people in large number; his religious behaviour was erratic. "The Emperor", writes 'Isami, "who is a friend of the mean and an enemy of the faith has completely abandoned the path of Islam. Every one high and low is annoyed with him and a rebellion of the country against him is justified. The *shari'at* has decreed his bloodshed and hearts are disgusted because of his deceit. The *qazis* have issued a *fatwa* to kill him: Destiny has slammed the door of slavation on him."[23] As a rejoinder to this Muhammad bin Tughluq got inscribed on his coins: "He who obeys the sultan, truly he obeys God."[24] But Muhammad bin Tughluq had to face more than twenty-two rebellions during his reign. The reasons were many: discontent generated by the new administrative experiments of the sultans; resentment on exodus from Delhi to Deogir; public indignation at barbarous and ruthless punishments inflicted on people suspected of treason; crisis created in the nobility by

strengthening the *amiran-i-sadah*; bitterness at the introduction of the token currency; displeasure at his arrogant behaviour towards the sufi saints and interference in their *khanqah* life; grudge at the fate of the Qarachil and Khurasan expeditions and the disbandment of large number of soldiers employed in the projects. The sultan had to concede that his country had become diseased and rebellions were raising their heads everywhere. He consulted Barani on the distemper in state affairs. The historian submitted:

> "I have read in the *Tarikh-i-Kisravi* that it is not possible for a ruler to govern without inflicting capital punishments. If a king does not do that, God alone knows what mischief and turmoil will be created by the activities of refractory people; even the obedient will be involved in thousands of sins. When a confidant asked the Persian emperor, Jamshed, about the cases in which capital punishment could be inflicted, Jamshed replied: The infliction of capital punishment by the king is justified in the case of seven offences. If the king goes beyond these limits, troubles for the kingdom will arise.
>
> (1) Apostasy—leaving the true creed and persisting in religious error; (2) murder—intentionally killing a law-abiding person; (3) adultery—cohabitation of a married man with the wife of another; (4) conspiracy—planning rebellion against the king in which the fact of the conspiracy is proved; (5) rebellion—leading a rebellion against the king or helping rebel leader; (6) helping the king's enemies, opponents or rivals by giving them information, arms or assisting them in other ways, and the facts are proved; (7) disobedience—disobedience to the king in a way that endangers the state but not disobedience of other kinds."[25]

The sultan then asked Barani as to how many of these seven categories of capital punishments were permitted by the Prophet, Barani replied: "Only for apostasy, murder and adultery".

This was a time of great mental stress for the sultan. He consulted Barani again. The historian said that under such circumstances rulers in the past had abdicated. But this was a suggestion against the very grain of the sultan. He expressed his determination to deal with the recalcitrant elements with harshness and improve the situation through strict measures and draconian punishments. It is however doubtful if Barani could muster up courage to suggest to a sultan like Muhammad bin Tughluq to resign. Maybe he mentioned abdication in a roundabout way but has mentioned in his narrative as a direct forthright suggestion.

Perhaps no other sultan of Delhi had to face so many rebellions and disturbances as Muhammad bin Tughluq. A cursory glance at these rebellions would reveal the nature of discontent and the involvement of areas and factions in creating these situations. Broadly speaking, the

rebellions before 1335 were individual insurrections which the sultan quelled himself or through his governors. Rebellions after 1335 were broad-based and well-planned. The following rebellions occurred in the first phase:

1. Rebellion of Baha-u'd-dĭn Gurshap
2. Rebellion of Kishlu Khan
3. Rebellion of the *qazi* and *khatib* of Kamalpur.
4. Rebellion of Ghiyas-u'd-din Bahadur
5. Rebellion of Wunar and Qaisar-i-Rumi
6. The Doab Rebellion

The rebellions in the second phase were:

1. Rebellion of Ma'bar
2. Rebellion of Mas'ud Khan
3. Rebellion of Hulajun
4. Rebellion of Malik Hoshang
5. Rebellion of Kampila and Warangal
6. Rebellion of Syed Ibrahim, governor of Hansi and Sirsa
7. Rebellion of Fakhra
8. Rebellion of Hindus and Muslims of Sunam, Samana, Kaithal and Kuhram
9. Rebellion of Nizam Main of Kara
10. Rebellion of Shihab-u'd-din Sultani at Bidar
11. Rebellion of 'Ali Shah of Gulbarga
12. Rebellion of 'Ain-ul-Mulk
13. Rebellion of Shahu Afghan
14. Rebellion of Qazi Jalal
15. Rebellion of Amiran-i-Sadah of Daulatabad
16. Rebellion of Taghi

It appears that rebellions in the first phase were expressions of individual discontent; in the second phase these rebellions were the result of widespread irritation and resentment against the policies of the sultan and his rulthless massacres. Ibn Battuta's account of some of the rebellions shows that the sultan adopted barbaric methods to quell these rebellions.

Prince Mas'ud was the sultan's step-brother; his mother was a daughter of Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji. "He was the most handsome of all the men that I have seen in the world", remarks Ibn Battuta. The Sultan had stoned his mother to death on a charge of adultery. Two years after this Mas'ud was charged with contemplating rebellion.

Afraid of tortures inflicted to extract confessions, he accepted the charge. He was executed and his body was kept hanging for three days.[26]

During the Sultanate period regicides were not wanting. Balban was responsible for the death of Sultan Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud by administering poison to him secretly or by starving him.[27] Raziya ordered the execution of Rukn-u'd-din Firuz whom she held responsible for the murder of her brother.[28] Kaiqubad was killed at the instigation of Jalal-u'd-din Khalji[29]; Jalal-u'd-din Khalji's assassination was planned by Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji;[30] Malik Kafur poisoned 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji;[31] Qutb-u'd-din Mubarak Khalji met his end at the hands of Khusrau Khan.[32] Every regicide was particularly anxious to conceal his or her crime, except Raziya who ordered the execution of Firuz on grounds of legal justice. All other killings were secretly arranged.

References

1. Barani, p. 78.
2. Barani, p. 258.
3. *Duwal Rani Khazir Khan*, p. 48.
4. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, Habibi ed., p. 456.
5. Ibid., p. 458.
6. Ibid., p. 460.
7. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 108.
   The *Saroor-us-Sudur* (MS) quotes a remark of Balban: "I have three *qazis*—one of them fears God but does not fear me; the second one fears me but does not fear God; the third one fears neither me nor God and he is Minhaj". Perhaps the *qazi* whose recommendation Balban accepted was the first one.
8. *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, pp. 276-77. See also Nizami, *The Life and Times of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh of Delhi*, p. 35.
9. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 254-55.
10. Ibid., p. 261.
11. Ibid., pp. 300-303.
12. Ibid., p. 263.
13. *Adab-ul-Harb*, p. 10.
14. Ibid., p. 16.
15. Ferishta, p. 144.
16. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, p. 76. See also *Masalik-ul-Absar*, p. 48.
17. *Tarikh-i-Fakhr-u'd-din Mubarak Shah*, p. 33.
18. Badauni, I, p. 335; tr., I, p. 441.
19. *Babur Namah*, tr., Beveridge, II, p. 470; *Da'udi*, p. 134; Ferishta, I, p. 204.
20. Yadgar, pp. 94-95.
21. Yadgar, p. 98.
22. Badauni, I, p. 335.
23. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, Eng. tr., III, pp. 764-65.
24. Edward Thomas, The *Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi*, p. 249.

25. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 509-11.
26. For details *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 136.
27. See Nizami, article on "Balban, the Regicide" in *Studies in Medieval Indian History and Culture*, pp. 41-53.
28. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 54.
29. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 172-74.
30. Ibid., p. 235.
31. Ibid., p. 369.
32. Ibid., p. 408.

CHAPTER 18

Contact with the Outside World

In the long history of India's contact with the outer world, the Mauryan period stands out prominently as an age of fruitful and intimate intercourse with foreign lands. When the Hindu society was, according to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, 'set in rigidity like a concrete structure,'[1] as a result of Brahmanical revival, the hardening of the caste institution and its policy of retreat by the eighth century AD—this contact was lost and, barring the coastal regions, India became isolated from the newly awakening world beyond her natural barriers. The Turkish conquest of northern India ended this isolation and established the international status of India in the then known world.[2]

Theoretically, the Delhi sultanate was a part of the Abbasid Caliphate and as such, a traveller could, in the worlds of Arnold, "pass from the confines of China to the pillars of Hercules, from the banks of Indus to Cicilian Gates, from the Oxus to the shores of the Atlantic, without stepping outside the boundaries of the territory ruled over by the caliph in Baghdad."[3] The Mongol irruption of Central Asia, however, upset this position and rendered almost impossible any contact on a large scale with the outer world. All free movements, either of the mystics or the traders or scholars, were completely paralysed because the cultural centres of eastern Islam had practically been wiped out of existence. Large numbers of Muslim princes, saints, scholars, philosophers, artisans and craftsmen fled to India for asylum and security. Consequently in the eyes of the contemporary Muslim world India emerged as the only effective bulwark against the Mongol danger.

Notwithstanding the turmoil in Central Asia, the sultans of Delhi did not ignore contact with the surviving cultural and political centres of the contemporary Muslim world.

Fakhr-i-Mudabbir, one of the earliest historians of medieval India, who dedicated his work to Iltutmish gives elaborate and interesting details about the necessity to send ambassadors to foreign powers, their essential qualifications and the nature and quality of gifts to be sent to foreign courts. The way he has spelled out every minute detail about

the physical and intellecutal qualities of the envoys shows that the sultans attached great importance to diplomatic contacts with contemporary powers.

The sultans displayed great political tact and sagacity in dealing with the most difficult problem of the time—their new neighbours, the Mongols. When the Shah of Khwarizm, Jalal-u'd-din Mangbarni, escaped into India and requested Iltutmish for asylum, the sultan politely refused to give him shelter and thus saved himself from getting involved in the Central Asian politics and inviting the wrath of Chengiz Khan. Though anxious to protect their frontiers, the early Turkish sultans of Delhi did not follow a policy of open hostility towards the Mongols. Hardly two years[4] had passed since the barbarous sack of Baghdad by Hulagu (AD 1258) that his emissaries visited Delhi (AD 1260) and were given a royal reception. More than two lac footmen and fifty thousand horsemen lined up the entire route from the town of Kilugarhi to the royal palace, while twenty rows of spectators and officials assembled there to welcome the Mongol emissaries.[5] The court chronicler would have us believe that all this was done to impress the Mongols with the glory and greatness of the sultan, but the desire to please the Mongol ruler was an equally strong reason for the welcome given to them. However, the purpose was well served and Hulagu issued instructions to his commanding officers to respect the Delhi frontier.[6] Thus, the early Turkish sultans succeeded at establishing contact with a power which was the greatest enemy of the Muslim world.

The Mongol irruption of Central Asia, however, proved a blessing in disguise for the nascent sultanate of Delhi. It threw large numbers of Muslim scholars, administrators, craftsmen, and traders into Delhi,[7] and thus supplied the much needed human material to consolidate the foundations of the newly established power. Even Qubacha raised his stature in Sind by giving shelter to these refugee scholars.[8] Wherever these foreign scholars settled, Muslim cultural centres soon rose up. When Balban named several *mohallas* in Delhi after the names of these refugee families and abandoned cities,[9] he further stabilized their position.[10] Consequently, India's prestige increased immensely in the contemporary Muslim world. Apart from providing shelter and protection to those who had left their homes and their hearths, and had settled in India, the sultan helped those in distress in their own homelands. Sultan Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud (1246-66) conferred on Minhaj-us-Siraj, the author of *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, large number of slaves

and horses to be conveyed to his sister who was in great distress in Khurasan.[11]

Sundry Mongol Incursions

Once the Mongol storm began to brew in Central Asia its backlash was bound to be felt in India. Well-planned invasions by Mongol leaders apart, stray Mongol incursions by chieftains in search of booty, created panic and confusion in the frontier towns. During the reigns of Bahram Shah[12], 'Ala-u'd-din Mas'ud[13] and Raziya,[14] Mongol invasions became a serious problem. The Mongols succeed in establishing their control over Lahore in 639/1241,[15] and some years later besieged Multan. In 648/1250, one finds many Mongol prisoners being sent to Delhi by Ikhtiyar-u'd-din Kurez.[16] In 656/1258 the sultan is found making preparation for repelling the Mongols.[17] Thus, from the time of Iltutmish, Mongol danger loomed large on the Indian horizon, and the policies of the Delhi sultans were directly or indirectly influenced by it. For several decades their foreign contacts suffered on account of the presence of Mongol hordes on the Indian frontiers and the supply of horses on which depended the strength of their armies was seriously jeopardized. Balban managed with great difficulty the supply of horses to his army.

Contact with the Kart Dynasty and its Political Implications

The Kart dynasty of Herat (1245-1381) which originated in Ghur was considered as continuator of Ghurid rule. Close to Jam and Chisht, its rulers had developed respect for ths sufis of different *silsilahs* particularly the Chishtis. In 644/1246 Malik Shams-u'd-din Kart besieged Multan and made a common cause with the Mongols under Sali Nuyin. The governor of Multan, Chingiz Khan, a slave of Iltutmish, approached Shaikh Baha-u'd-din Zakariya, the famous Suhrawardi saint of Multan, to intercede on his behalf and secure the retreat of the Mongol army. A sum of one lac *dinars* was handed over to them as ransom and both the invaders retired. That the Kart ruler should join hands with the Mongols was a development which opened the eyes of the Delhi sultan to new possibilities of alliance and strategy.

The mystic centre of Chisht was held in high esteem not only by those associated with the Chishti *silsilah*, but by Sultan Balban also. Khwaja 'Ali, a saint of the Chishti *silsilah*, had settled in Delhi. Once there was some quarrel about succession among the saints of Chisht. Khwaja Zoor and Khwaja Ghur, two senior saints of the *silsilah* came

from Chisht to persuade Khwaja 'Ali to return to his home town and grace the *sajjadah* of the Chishti *silsilah*. When Khwaja 'Ali set out for Chisht, Balban felt deeply disturbed. He fell at his feet and begged him to stay on in India. "If you will leave for Chisht", he said, "I will abandon my kingdom and accompany you". The saint replied: "You are charged by God with the duty of looking after the welfare of people and a whole world is enjoying peace and prosperity under your benign rule. If you would (leave kingship and) go to Chisht there would be widespread grievance and discontent and you will be held responsible for it".[18] Impressed by Balban's devotion, Khwaja 'Ali decided to stay on in Delhi.[19] According to a later account, Balban became his disciple.[20] When the two Chishti saints were on their way back to Chisht, they passed by Ajodhan. Shaikh Farid Ganj-i-Shakar came out and received them with great warmth and respect outside the town, and brought them in. He got his two sons, Shaikh Shihab-u'd-din and Shaikh Badr-u'd-din Sulaiman initiated into the Chishti *silsilah* by them.[21]

Mir Khurd's father Sayyid Nur-u'd-din Mubarak had visited Chisht twice and was granted *khilafat* by Khwaja Qutb-u'd-din. When on his way back to India, the Khwaja gave a horse to him which was branded with his personal stamp. On the way he was harassed by the Mongols who wanted to deprive him of all his belongings; but when they saw the Khwaja's personal brand on the horse, they kissed its hooves and let it go.[22]

Now these incidents help to illumine a whole background. Balban's respect for Shaikh 'Ali, Shaikh Farid Ganj-i-Shakar, Khwaja Zoor and Khwaja Ghur shows his intimate awareness of the position of Chisht and its Kart rulers. Significantly, the Kart rulers had good relations with the Mongols. It is not improbable that in the new phase of good relationship of Delhi sultans with the Mongols this background had also played some role.

Contact with the Ilkhans

Wassaf says that the Ilkhans had relations with the sultans of Delhi.[23] He does not give any details of this relationship. An important determining circumstance in Ilkhanid attitude towards India was their Buddhist background. Notwithstanding the fact that they were Muslims now, they had deep emotional attachment with Buddhism and were brought up in a chequered religious culture. Ghazan got converted to Sunni Islam. His successor and brother Uljaitu was in succession a Christian, a Buddhist and finally a Muslim (first Hanafi, subsequently

Shafi'i and finally a Shi'ite). The last Ilkhan Abu Sa'id was a devout Sunni. This accounts for Rashid-u'd-din Fazl Allah's interest in Buddhism. Of the twenty chapters of his history of India, eighteen are devoted to the life and teachings of Shakamuni. Of the remaining two, the opening chapter gives a short survey of the religions of India from the Buddhist point of view.[24]

Abul Fazl refers to Rashid-u'd-din Fazl Allah's visit as an envoy to the Court of Sultan Mubarak Shah Khalji (716-20/1316-20).[25] *Mukatabat-i-Rashidi*,[26] however, shows that 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji also had diplomatic relations with the Ilkhans and Rashid-u'd-din had visited India twice as an envoy.[27]

It may be pointed out that some of the Ilkhans were familiar with Indian history and culture as a large part of the Punjab had been under their control. Ghazan Khan had some knowledge of the Hindivi and the Kashmiri languages,[28] and he was fond of Indian herbs and elephants.[29] Significantly, Rashid-u'd-din traces the genealogy of the Mongol dynasty from the ancient legendary dynasties of India. His statement that Shihab-u'd-din Muhammad Ghuri wanted to reinstate Prithvi Raj on the throne of Ajmer,[30] is very significant. Rashid-u'd-din wrote the book during the early years of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji's reign. He refers to his heinous murder of his uncle Jalal-u'd-din Khalji, but certifies to the prosperity of people during his regime. It was after compiling his *History* that Rashid-u'd-din happened to visit India. In his epistolary collection there are six letters[31] which contain reference to India. In a letter (no. XXIX) written from Multan to a friend in Shiraz, Maulana Qutb-u'd-din Mas'ud[32], he gives details of his diplomatic mission to the court of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji. The letter says that he was sent to India by Arghun Khan (630-90/1284-91), but this is obviously a copyist's error for Uljaitu (703-16/1304-16). The purpose of this embassy was twofold: first, to impress upon the kings and rulers of India the majesty of the Ilkhans, and secondly, to procure certain herbs and drugs which were not found in Iran. He writes:

> "So that the attribute of the majesty of Ilkhans and the details of their valour be conveyed to the ears of the rulers of the great cities and districts of that region and they may be brought to the yoke of submission and the path of friendship. (The other purpose was) to procure efficacious medicines and wholesome drinks which are as rare in the lands of Iran as Imaginary geometrical drawings and alchemy and the fabulous bird."[33]

When 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji came to know about his arrival, he sent

some of his nobles to escort him to Delhi.

Rashid-u'd-din was warmly received by 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji and was treated with a generosity he did not expect. He did not, however, approve of the convivial parties at the 'Alai court. Obviously, this must have been in the early years of 'Ala-u'd-din's reign. Rashid-u'd-din could not help advising the sultan about the evils of drunkenness. That this uncalled for advice did not behove a foreign envoy and could create an unpleasant situation cannot be denied, but 'Ala-u'd-din, as Rashid-u'd-din would have us believe, patiently listened to his admonition. We do not know the exact date when the sultan issued his prohibitory regulations, but to the circumstances stated by Barani,[34] 'Isami and Yahya Sirhindi, the *Mukatabat-i-Rashidi* obviously adds one more. 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji was the first sultan of Delhi to enforce rigorously a policy of prohibition and it is not without significane that Rashid-u'd-din was also in some measure responsible for it.[35]

Being a seasoned diplomat, Rashid-u'd-din soon succeeded in winning the good-will and affection of Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji who assigned to him four village as *Suyurghal* (fief). The area of each of these villages, according to Rashid-u'd-din, was greater than the city of Yezd. Some of the details of this grant, as supplied by him, are interesting from the point of view of the administrative history of the Delhi Sultanate.

1. The grant was perpetual and hereditary (*suyurghal-i-abadi*).
2. The trust deed was endorsed by *qazis* and administrators.
3. The revenue officials were instructed to remit regularly the revenues of villages to the Khwaja.
4. The revenues were to be remitted through trustworthy merchants (*Tujjar-i-amin*) who would hand them over to the Khwaja's agents in Basra and obtain receipts. It may be pointed out that the *Tarikh-i-Ghazan Khan* refers to frequent visits of Indian traders to the land of the Mongols.[36]
5. These receipts of payment were to be submitted to the sultan.
6. The payment was to be made to the Khwaja's heirs in the same manner.

Over and above this land grant, Rashid-u'd-din was to receive an annual stipend (*idrar*) of 5,000 *misqals* of gold (*zar-i-'Alai*) and something from the revenues of Gujarat was also to be given to him.[37]

R. Levy[38] has doubted the authenticity of *Mukatabat-i-Rashidi*. His arguments have, however, been rebutted.[39] The fact that Rashid-u'd-din has mentioned his Indian grants in his *Waqf Namah*[40] is too significant to be ignored.

Rashid-u'd-din says nothing about the duration of his stay in India, and no date of his visit is given in the letter. But after a careful sifting of all available evidence it seems that he must have come sometime after 703/1303 and before 708/1308. First, in his *Tarikh-i-Hind wa-Sind*, compiled in 703 AH, he writes about India on the basis of information he was able to gather from travellers.[41] He does not state anything authoritatively, or as an eye witness as he had not visited India till then. Secondly, in a letter written in 708/1308, we find him making arrangements for his Indian grants.

When Rashid-u'd-din embarked on his return journey, 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji gave him many gifts and presents and asked him to send one of his sons to India. "I want", he said, "that you send one of your sons noted for bravery, courage and ingenuity to me so that I may give him the control of the affairs of my country just as the land of Iran is under your control." The sultan assured him that he would take full care of his son and then he significantly remarked: "In this way affectionate and cordial relations will be established and maintained for ever."

The *Mukatabat* contains a letter sent by 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji to Rashid-u'd-din in reply to his communication. It appears from this letter that the Khwaja was instrumental in solving some of the complications in his diplomatic relations with the Ilkhans. 'Ala-u'd-din writes: "I was trying to cheer up my heart by having a look at a meadow but my heart was far from being delighted. Quite unexpectedly your messenger arrived, as the sun emerges from the east, and gave me your letter which delighted me and its contents relieved me of my worries". There is something more in these lines than purely formal expression of good wishes on the receipt of a letter. We do not know what the worries of 'Ala-u'd-din were. Maybe he was upset on account of some impending Mongol incursion. It may, however, be pointed out that 'Ala-u'd-din's struggle was with the Mongols of Central Asia and not with the Ilkhans. In letter no. XXXIV written to his son, Khwaja Majd-u'd-din, details about such a situation are given, not the reasons. Wassaf has, however, referred to an incident which is of great significance in this context. Uljaitu, he says, had expressed his surprise mixed with sentiments of displeasure at the silence of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji, who had not felicitated him on his accession. Perhaps the reference to his worries in 'Ala-u'd-din's letter may be due to this.

In his letter 'Ala-ud-din has hinted at Rashid-u'd-din's efforts at maintaining cordial relations between him and the Ilkhanid king. 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji has apologized for delay in replying to his communication.

"I felt ashamed," writes 'Ala-u'd-din "to send a letter which from the point of view of style could not be compared to your consummate and masterly diction".

'Ala-u'd-din sent him a number of gifts which included cloth, precious stones and rubies, animals and birds, confectionary, herbs and medicines, oils, china-vessels, building wood, bones etc. This list gives a good idea of Indian goods and commodities which had special significance and attraction for a foreigner.

Rashid-u'd-din had relations with Indian scholars and sufis. In a letter to his son Amir 'Ali, governor of Baghdad, he recommends Maulana Shams-u'd-din Hindi, "a peerless mathematician of Delhi" for stipend and patronage.[42] He sent a letter of condolence to Shaikh Sadr-u'd-din 'Arif of Multan (son of Shaikh Baha-u'd-din Zakariya Suhrawardi) on the death of his son.[43]

With the advent of Muhammad bin Tughluq, relations with the Ilkhanid sultans, particularly Sultan Abu Sa'id, entered a new phase. Abu Sa'id (1316-35) was young, but his politico-religious view were very much akin to those of Muhammad bin Tughluq. In a letter to Muhammad bin Tughluq he says that he had always looked upon "religion and state as twins".[44] This was the bedrock of Muhammad bin Tughluq's political ideology.[45] Naturally, both of them came very close ideologically. Maybe Abu Sa'id also, like Muhammad bin Tughluq[46] was influenced by the views of Ibn Taimiyya. The *Bayaz Taj-u'd-din Wazir* contains Muhammad bin Tughluq's letter to Sultan Abu Sa'id and his reply to this letter. Muhammad bin Tughluq refers to him as *Sultan-ul-Islam*,[47] praises his religious sentiments and then draws his attention to certain unpleasant developments in Khurasan and in Sind.[48] He seeks Abu Sa'id's cooperation in dealing with this situation. Abu Sa'id in reply refers to Muhammad bin Tughluq as *Sultan-i-'Azam Mujahid-al-'Adil*.[49] Perhaps Muhammad bin Tughluq was planning an attack on Khurasan and was keen to enlist the support to Abu Sa'id. The accounts of 'Isami, Barani and Ibn Battuta are so conflicting and confusing that no definite formulations are possible on their basis. At this time, there was political vacuum in Central Asia and Persia and Muhammad bin Tughluq wanted to take advantage of this political situation.[50]

Amir Khurd tells us that Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq had asked Shaikh Fakhr-u'd-din Zarradi, a distinguished *khalifah* of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, and some other eminent scholars and saints of Delhi to cooperate with him in his efforts to crush the Mongols.[51] He presented

his military preparations against the Mongols as a *jihad*.[52] Sultan Abu Sa'id's respectful reference to Hulagu Khan in his letter[53] makes it extremely doubtful if Muhammad bin Tughluq was seeking his cooperation in some campaign against the Mongols. Though fully converted to Sunni Islam, Abu Sa'id was not able to shake off his respect for his ancestors who had torn the fabric of Islamic civilization to pieces. Abu Sa'id's death in 1335 completely changed the scenario of Ilkhanid authority in Iran.

Muhammad bin Tughluq's Global Perspective

With the accession of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq (1325-51), a new phase began in the history of India's diplomatic and cultural relations with the world outside. Probably no sultan, before or after him, knew so much about the political developments in the neighbouring regions as Muhammad bin Tughluq. His political ken extended up to Egypt on the one side, and China and Khurasan on the other. He was not satisfied with merely establishing contact with the governing classes; he was anxious to win the goodwill of the masses, particularly the saints and scholars of these regions. In fact, many of his measures—e.g. the Qarachil and Khurasan expeditions—will remain unintelligible unless considered in the broader context of political developments in the East. The *Fara'id-i-Ghiyasi* and *Bayaz Taj-u'd-din Wazir* contain a few letters which throw light on Muhammad bin Tughluq's relations with the neighbouring powers, and his anxiety to secure their involvement and participation in some of his projects.

Muhammad bin Tughluq established diplomatic relations with Egypt, Iraq and Syria. The Iraq embassy was sent to him by Musa.[54] Haji Kaon came as his envoy. Musa was himself a cousin of Sultan Abu Sa'id of Iran. Amir Saif-u'd-din,[55] son of the chief of Syria, came to Muhammad bin Tughluq as an envoy. Muhammad bin Tughluq sent Bighdan, one of his private secretaries, to distribute one crore *tankas* in the sacred towns of Iraq.[56] While Indian historians have given very meagre information about his contacts with foreign powers, the accounts of the Arab travellers and historians like al-Qalqashandi,[57] Shihab-u'd-din al-'Umari,[58] Ibn Hajar Asqalani,[59] Maqrizi[60] and Salah-ud-din Safadi[61] throw valuable light on the political and cultural activities of the sultan. According to Ibn Hajar Asqalani, Muhammad bin Tughluq had sent a ship load of costly Indian cloth to Sultan al-Nasir of Egypt.

The Sultan was extremely kind and considerate towards the foreigners. Instead of *gharib*, which in normal colloquial parlance meant a foreigner,

he called them '*aziz*,[62] (meaning dear). He gave foreigners important government posts and assignments in the judicial and charity departments. All foreign visitors and scholars had to stay in Multan till the Sultan's permission for their entry was received. This class of foreign '*ulama* which was very much favoured by the Sultan created heart burn among the Indian '*ulama*. When Firuz Shah ascended the throne he refused entry to foreign scholars. He gave them money no doubt but sent them back to their own homelands.[63] This was done perhaps to win the goodwill of the Indian '*ulama*. But as was inevitable, foreign relationship on a wide scale as envisaged by Muhammad bin Tughluq received a setback and the era of global relationship came to an end.

Muhammad bin Tughluq seems to have developed close contact with China. The Chinese ruler Togon Timur[64] sent some embassies to him also. One of the Chinese missions consisted of fifteen men with a retinue of one hundred servants. It was headed by Tursi.[65] The Emperor of China sent enormous gifts to the sultan who reciprocated the gesture by sending a bigger party with larger gifts. The party was escorted to the sea by Amir Mahmud Haravi with one thousand horsemen accompanying it.[66]

The token currency experiment of Muhammad bin Tughluq was inspired by the Chinese example. Under Qublai Khan (1260-93) of China and Kaikhatu Khan (1293) of Iran, attempts at introducing a token currency had been made. The Iranian experiment had failed but the Chinese venture of introducing paper currency—the *Chao*—had been successful.[67] Muhammad bin Tughluq must have come to know about the Chinese experiment through his emissaries and envoys.

But then, we are told by Ibn Battuta that Chinese encroachments on the independent Rajput kingdoms in the Himalayas had made Muhammad bin Tughluq apprehensive of the developments. At a strategic place they had built an idol temple.[68] Muhammad bin Tughluq's Qarachil expedition actually aimed at rectifying the situation created by Chinese infiltrations in the region.

The king of Transoxiana, Tarmashirin, paid two visit to India.[69] In the course of his first visit he was fraternized with, and he, in return, threw open Ghaznin, an outpost of his dominion, to all communications and diplomatic relations with India.[70] But the Sultan's relations with Tarmashirin became inimical subsequently.

Muhammad bin Tughluq received an embassy sent by Princess Turabak, wife of Qatlu Damur, ruler of Khwarizm.

The data available to us about Muhammad bin Tughluq's diplomatic activities is so tantalizing in its brevity that it is difficult to have a clear idea of his plans and strategies. The Indian historians were not clear even about the countries he wanted to attack. Besides, unless firm chronological framework is available, it is difficult to draw any definite conclusion from these stray references and documents. The *Fara'id-i-Ghiyasi* gives a letter addressed to Muhammad bin Tughluq by Sultan Mu'izz-u'd-din Abul Husain Kart (1331-69). Besides, a *manshur* of Muhammad bin Tughluq making a grant of ten million *tankas* to the people of Warrarud (a city in Khurasan), who had suffered as a result of some calamity in the city, is important. Crores of *tankas* were sent to these lands by Muhammad bin Tughluq, ostensibly with the purpose of building up a good reputation in these regions.

Sayyid Contacts with the Timurids

Timur's invasion created havoc in India. He carried sword and fire into many flourishing towns of the north and disturbed the centres of political and cultural gravity in the country. Large numbers of scholars left Delhi and the adjoining areas in search of security and carried with them the cultural importance of the towns they left. The Tughluq dynasty which had been in the focus of political life for more than ninety years sang its swan song and disappeared yielding place to the Sayyid dynasty.

Timur's wanton destruction of human life was terrific. Every soldier and accompanying scholar was asked to kill a certain number of innocent prisoners. Maulana Nasir-u'd-din 'Umar, an '*alim*, who had never killed a sparrow in his life, was obliged to kill fifteen prisoners in his custody.[71] Before Timur set out on his Indian campaign, he had delivered a speech exhorting people to join him in his religious campaign. Nothing could have been a more deceptive and fraudulent claim. He presented his lust for gold and glory in terms of religious passion. Barthold has correctly pointed out that Timur used religious zeal for attainment of his political ends. In Syria he appeared as the avenger of the wrongs suffered by the Prophet's house.[72]

But Timur was not an uncultured ruthless invader. He used to take writers, scholars and craftsmen from conquered territories to Samarqand which he wanted to make the first city in the world. He carried out grandiose schemes of irrigation in Kabul and other places.[73] His knowledge of history took Ibn Khaldun by surprise.[74] He participated effectively in religious debates and discussions. About his religious

attitude, Ibn Arab Shah has pointed out that in his army there were idolaters who carried their idols with them.[75] For a ruler with such attitude it was sheer hypocrisy and blatant deception to appear on the Indian scene as one inspired by iconoclastic zeal.

Shaikh Ahmad Maghribi,[76] the founder saint of Ahmadabad, happened to be in Delhi when Timur invaded India. His is perhpas the only eye witness account of Timur's camp of prisoners.[77] After mass arrest of the people of Delhi, the prisoners were divided into groups of 40 and each group was tied with a rope "like beads in a rosary". The prisoners were not given anything to eat. Thousands died of starvation and hunger. Shaikh Ahmad's spiritual bearing and aroma somehow attracted Timur. "If you have such (intuitive) power", Timur turned to Shaikh Ahmad, "why didn't you come to know about my invasion and manage to escape from Delhi before my forces reached here?" The Shaikh's saintly ways, however, impressed Timur. His mood changed and the fury which had taken the toll of several thousand innocent people of Delhi cooled down. Not only the *silk* (chain) of Shaikh Ahmad but the entire arrested population was set free. This brought Shaikh Ahmad suddenly into prominence and the people of Delhi, generation after generation, remembered with profound feelings of gratitude his contribution in rescuing them from the clutches of a tyrant like Timur.[78]

When the Mughal nobles and soldiers saw Timur kindly disposed towards Shaikh Ahmad, they also began to show respect to him. Malik Saif-ul-Mulk became a disciple of the saint and presented a horse to him. When Timur started on his journey back home, Shaikh Ahmad accompanied him. It is not known if it was the Shaikh's own decision or Timur had ordered him to that effect. However, it was unique experience of Shaikh Ahmad's life to move with the army of one of the greatest and most ferocious conquerors of the age. At a narrow pass where the Mughal soldiers had to cross one by one, Shaikh Ahmad came face to face with some ladies of Timur's *haram* who were all surrounded by a contingent of eunuchs. Some of them expressed faith in the saint and communicated through the eunuchs, a number of whom had become attached to Shaikh Ahmad. Prince Shah Rukh and his contingent of women, soldiers and servants displayed great respect for the Shaikh and thus he came to be surrounded by hundreds of admirers. One day the Shaikh thought of an interview with Timur. He proceeded towards his tent without first obtaining his permission. Five hundred fully armed Turkbachchas stood there guarding the entrance,

another contingent of 500 stood on Timur's left. On a rostrum as high as a man's height sat Timur talking to Sahikh 'Abd-ul-Awwal, a descendant of the author of *Hidayah*, the famous law-book. The Turkbachchas at first hesitant, permitted Shaikh Ahmad to enter the darbar and he got close to the rostrum. Timur received him with consideration and asked him to take a seat near him. Turning to Shaikh 'Abd-ul-Awwal, Timur said: "You place some academic problems before Shaikh Ahmad for elucidation". Shaikh 'Abd-ul-Awwal and Shaikh Ahmad Maghribi were denizens of two different worlds: one, an externalist scholar with a traditional and legalistic approach towards all problems of religion and society; the other, a mystic with a spiritual and otherworldly outlook, interested more in spirit than the letter of the law. It was obvious that the two could never agree, but Timur enjoyed the discussion and when it was on the verge of taking an unpleasant turn, he ordered food to be served. Conscious of the presence of Timur, the two guests took little from the dishes. Timur noticed this but went on recommending one dish after another to them. He enjoyed every breach of table manners by them.

As the Sayyid dynasty owed its rise to Timur, the descendants of Khizr Khan continued to look upon Timur and his successor Shah Rukh as their overlord. They paid annual tribute to them and pronounced their names in the *khutba*. Shah Rukh granted robes of honour to them.[79] Abul Fazl thus sums up the position: "Khizr Khan in gratitude (to Timur) did not assume the regal title but styled his court 'the Sublime standards', and adorned the *khutba* with the name of that illustrious monarch and afterwards with that of Mirza Shah Rukh, but it concluded with a prayer for himself."[80]

Intellectual Contact with the World of Islam

During the period under review the intellectual world of Islam produced several savants of outstanding calibre, such as Shaikh Farid-u'd-din 'Attar (ob. 1230), Shaikh Shihab-u'd-din Suhrawardi (ob. 1234), Shaikh Sa'di (ob. 1292), Maulana Jalal-u'd-din Rumi (ob. 1273), Ibn 'Arabi (ob. 1240), Ibn Taimiyya (ob. 1328), Fakhr-u'd-din Razi (ob. 1209), Hafiz of Shiraz (ob. 1389) and Ibn Khaldun (ob. 1406).

The literary and ideological contributions of each one of them reached India and influenced contemproary thought. Shaikh Shihab-u'd-din Suhrawardi's '*Awarif-ul-Ma'arif* became a guide-book for those engaged in organizing *khanqahs* in India. Shaikh Farid-u'd-din Ganj-i-Shakar used to teach it to his disciples and prepared a summary also.[81]

Sa'di's literary works and spiritual eminence were appreciated in *khanqahs*[82] and courts[83] alike. Rumi's verses came to be recited in the *khanqahs* of Delhi.[84] Ibn 'Arabi's works also became popular very early and commentarie came to be written on them in Delhi (Abul Mahasin Sharaf-u'd-din Dihlawi), Kashmir (Sayyid 'Ali Hamadani) and Gujarat (Shaikh 'Ali Maha'imi).[85] Ibn Taimiyya's pupil 'Abd-ul-'Aziz Ardbaili introduced the Imam's thought to Muhammad bin Tughluq.[86] Fakhr-u'd-din Razi's exigetical studies came to be discussed even at places like Nagaur.[87] His *Sirr al-Maktum* was translated at the instance of Iltutmish. Hafiz's verses reached India during his life-time, and were appreciated by the people of Kashmir and Bengal. He himself says:

> The black-eye beauties of Kashmir and the Turks of Samarqand,
> Sing and dance to the strains of Hafiz of Shiraz's verse.
> All the parrots of India become sugar-breakers,
> Through this Persian candy which is going to Bengal.

Commercial Contacts

Commercial contacts with the outer world developed during the Sultanate period despite the limitations of hazardous journey and unsafe roads. 'Isami refers to the presence of Chinese traders in Delhi during the reign of Iltutmish. The sultan personally saw the articles they had brought.[88] Horses were imported from Turkistan, Russia, Iraq and Bahrain.[89] Balban claimed that he could import horses in spite of the problems created by the Mongols.[90] Elephants were taken from India for the Ilkhanid rulers.[91] Indian sword (*shamshir-i-Hindi*) was popular in other lands.[92] In a petition drafted by Amir Khusrau on behalf of a merchant and presented to a high official during the time of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji, there is reference to the presence of foreign traders in Delhi, who had made enormous profits in the West, in Syria, Abyssinia, Rustak, Egypt and Madain and were expected to proceed to China and Khita after visiting Delhi.[93] Yahya Sirhindi describes the prosperity of the Khorasani merchants during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq and says: "All the big mansions in the prosperous city (Delhi) were owned by them. They used to purchase all articles, such as, slaves, gold and silver, paper and books, and sent those articles to Khorasan."[94] Muhammad bin Tughluq used to send one Sayyid Abul Hasan Ibadi to purchase weapons and other things for him in Iraq and Khorasan.[95] The *Tarikh-i-Ghazan Khan* refers to the frequent visits of Indian traders to the lands of the Mongols.[96] It appears that the same feelings which an Indian merchant had expressed against the foreign

merchants, were similarly expressed by the merchant of other lands about the Indian traders carrying business in foreign countries.[97] During the reign of Firuz Shah Tughluq a Khorasani merchant assaulted the *kotwal* in the royal palace. When the matter was brought before the sultan he hesitated to inflict any severe punishment on him and said: "How should he be dealt with. He is the native of a foreign land!" Ultimately, it was decided that all the Khorasani traders in Delhi should be called and asked to spit on his face because he had disgraced them in a foreign land and then he should be expelled from the country.[98]

Shihab-u'd-din al-'Umari informs us: "The merchants from other regions bring pure gold to India and take in exchange merchandise of herbs and Arabic gums".[99] Fruits were brought from Khorasan for Muhammad bin Tughluq. Once the sultan sent Turkish and Arabian horses and fruits brought for him from Khorasan as present to Sultan Shams-u'd-din of Lakhnauti.[100] The garments distributed by Muhammad bin Tughluq in spring were prepared in Alexandria. The garments for the summer were prepared in Delhi, but their stuff was brought from China and Iraq.[101] 'Afif informs us that two thousand slave girls in the *haram* of Khan-i-Jahan belonged to Rum and China.[102] Amir Khusrau mentions the use of Syrian (*Shami*) paper in Delhi. According to Barbosa (*c.*1518), a kind of sash named *sirband*, made in Bengal, was liked by European ladies for their head-dress and by Arab and Persian merchants for use as turbans.[103] Varthema (1503-8) informs us that Cambay and Bangla were the two important ports in the north from where silk and cotton stuffs were taken to Persia, Tartary, Syria, Barbary (i.e. Africa), Ethiopia etc.[104] Thus, there was brisk commercial contact with the Asiatic world during the Sultanate period.

References

1. *India Through the Ages*, p. 43.
2. See Nizami, "Studies in Medieval Indian History and Culture", pp. 1-2, paper read at the All India Oriental Conference held at Annamalainagar, 1953.
3. *Travels and Travellers of the Middle Ages*, p. 89.
4. Yahya Sirhindi, however, says that in the very year of the sack of Baghdad i.e. 656 H (AD 1258), embassies from Turkistan reached the sultan who rewarded them with rich presents and valuable gifts. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 38.
5. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, pp. 317-19; Ferishta, p. 73. See also the poem recited by Minhaj on this occasion, p. 319.
6. *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, p. 322.
7. Minhaj, p. 166; 'Isami, pp. 114-15.
8. Minhaj, p. 143.

9. Ferishta, quoting *Mulhiqat-i-Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, I, p. 75.
10. Balban's practice was followed by Timur who built around Samarqand a series of villages bearing the names of the chief towns of Islam; Baghdad, Damascus, Misr (Cairo), Shiraz and Sultaniya. Barthold, *Studies*, vol. I, p. 60.
11. Minhaj, pp. 213-14.
12. Minhaj, pp. 194-195.
13. Minhaj, p. 200.
14. Raverty, p. 727.
15. Raverty, pp. 194-95, 655.
16. Minhaj, pp. 314-15; Raverty, p. 688.
17. Raverty, p. 711.
18. Saif b. Muhammad, *Tarikh Namah-i-Harat*, Calcutta, 1944, pp. 157-58. See also Nizami's article, "The Suhrawardi silsilah and its influence on Medieval Indian Politics" in *Medieval Indian Quarterly*, vol. III, pp. 121-22.
19. *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, pp. 212-13.
20. 'Abd-ur-Rahman, *Mir'at-ul-Asrar*, MS.
21. *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, p. 189.
22. Ibid., p. 211.
23. Wassaf, *Tajziyat al-Amsar wa Tajziyat al-A'sar*, Bombay ed., p. 528.
24. See Karl Jahn, *Rashid al-Din's History of India*, The Hague, 1965, pp. xxi et seq.
25. *A'in-i-Akbari*, Sir Sayyid ed., vol. II, p. 200.
26. Edited by M. Shafi', Lahore, 1947.
27. See Nizami's paper "Rashid al-Din Fazl Allah and India" in *Proceedings of the Colloquim on Rashid al-Din Fadl Allah*, Tehran, 1971, pp. 36-53.
28. *Tarikh-i-Ghazan Khan*, p. 171.
29. Ibid., pp. 150, 254.
30. Rampur MS of Rashid-u'd-din's *Tarikh-i Hind* gives this information.
31. Nos. 12, 29, 34, 43, 47, 52.
32. *Mukatabat*, pp. 159-68.
33. *Mukatabat-i-Rashidi*, pp. 163-64.
34. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 384 et seq.
35. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, pp. 314-15.
36. *Tarikh-i-Ghazan Khan*, pp. 271-72.
37. *Mukatabat*, pp. 166-67.
38. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1946, pp. 74-78.
39. Nizami, (article), op. cit., pp. 46-47.
40. The writer of these lines had seen this *Waqf Namah* in Tabriz on the occasion of *The Colloquim on Rashid-u'd-din Fazl Allah*.
41. *Rashid al-Din's History of India*, pp. 5, 51, 97.
42. Letter no. XIX, p. 62.
43. *Mukatabat*, pp. 29-32.
44. *Bayaz Taj-ud-din Wazir*, p. 410.
45. *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, p. 196; Barani, p. 459. See also, Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 334 et seq.
46. See Nizami, "The Impact of Ibn Taimiyya on South Asia" in *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Oxford, vol. I, 1990, pp. 124-34.
47. p. 405.
48. p. 406.
49. p. 411.
50. For details, Nizami in *Comprehensive History of India*, V, pp. 519-21.

51. *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, p. 273.
52. Ibid., pp. 271-2.
53. *Bayaz*, p. 409.
54. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 114.
55. Ibid., p. 128; Mahdi Husain, Eng. tr., p. 77.
56. *Masalik-ul-Absar*, p. 34.
57. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, text printed in Egypt, Eng. tr. of portion pertaining to India, *An Arab Account of India in the 14th Century*, Aligarh.
58. Eng. tr. Otto Spies, S.A. Rashid and S. Mo'in-ul-Haqq, Lahore, 1943.
59. *Al-Durar al-Kaminah*, Hyderabad, 1349, vol. III, pp. 406-61.
60. *Kitab al-Mawaiz wal Itabar bi zikr al-Khatat wal Asar*, Beirut, vol. II, p. 194.
61. *Al-A'yan-ul-'Asr*, in 6 vols. Rare MS in Dar-ul-Kutub al-Misriya.
62. *Rehla*, tr. Mahdi Husain, p. 4.
63. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 538.
64. Ibn Battuta mentions erroneously Pashai as the name of the Chinese Emperor. His name was Togan Timur and was called Sun Ti (1333-68) by the Chinese. Ibn Battuta, *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, pp. 235-36. Def. et sang., IV, p. 1; Ishwari Prasad, *History of Qaraunah Turks*, p. 135.
65. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, pp. 235-6; *Rehla*, Eng. tr., Mehdi Husain, p. 151.
66. Ibid.
67. See Nizami in *Comprehensive History of India*, V, pp. 515-18.
68. Ibid.
69. *Rehla*, Eng. tr., p. iii.
70. Ibid.
71. Elliot, III, p. 436.
72. Barthold, *Studies*, I, p. 59.
73. Ibid., p. 60.
74. Ibid.
75. As cited by Barthold, *Studies*, II, p. 30.
76. For a detailed study of Shaikh Ahmad Maghribi, see, Nizami, "Shaikh Ahmad Maghribi as a great historical personality of Medieval Gujarat" in *Medieval India Miscellany*, vol. III, pp. 234-59.
77. *Tuhfat-ul-Majalis*, MS, I.O.D.P. no. 979. The following account is based on the information available in the *malfuz*.
78. Badauni (*Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, vol. I, p. 270) refers to the role of the Shaikh in securing the pardon of Timur.
79. Bihamid Khani, *Tarikh-i-Muhammadi*, 311b-312-2aff.
80. *A'in-i-Akbari*, II, p. 312.
81. Ghausi Shattari, *Gulzar-i-Abrar*, MS.
82. *Khair-ul-Majalis*, p. 143.
83. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 68.
84. *Khair-ul-Majalis*, p. 163.
85. For details, see Nizami, *Tarikh-i-Maqalat*, chapter on Ibn 'Arabi and India, pp. 14-38.
86. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 113.
87. *Saroor-us-Sudur*, MS, p. 109.
88. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 122.
89. *Masalik-ul-Absar*, p. 22; *Ibn Battuta*, Gibb, pp. 145-46.
90. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 53.
91. *Tarikh-i-Ghazan Khan*, p. 254.

92. *Rahat-us-Sudur*, ed. M. Iqbal, p. 35.
93. *I'jaz-i-Khusravi*, II, p. 319.
94. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, pp. 107-8.
95. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, p. 211; *Rehla*, Eng. tr., p. 131.
96. *Tarikh-i-Ghazan Khan*, pp. 271-72.
97. Ibid., p. 285.
98. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 494-7.
99. *Masalik-ul-Absar*, p. 61.
100. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 127.
101. *Masalik-ul-Absar*, p. 30.
102. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 400.
103. *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, Hakluyt Society, II, p. 145.
104. *The Travels of Ludovic Varthema*, III, p. 212.

CHAPTER 19

Tombs

Constructing an edifice over the grave of a deceased monarch was a tradition of the Delhi royalty. Sometime, a sultan built his tomb in his own lifetime, but nature willed otherwise and they had to use those buildings for burying their own sons. These tombs often became brisk centres of religious activity, recitation of the *Qur'an* and distribution of alms. *Khatimis* (reciters of the *Qur'an*) were employed to bless the soul of the departed. Sometimes *madrasahs* for religious instruction were established within the precincts of a mausoleum.[1] Dynastic prestige, individual honour, religious sentiments—all went into the construction of mausolea.

Sultan Shihab-u'd-din Muhammad was on his way back to Ghaznin when some assassins put an end to his life at Damyak[2] (on 3 Sha'ban 602 H/AD1206). It was perhaps the result of a Mulahidah-Khokar conspiracy. As Maulana Fakhr-u'd-din Razi was not in the good books of the Mulahidah, they were perhaps responsible for spreading the rumour that the Maulana had a hand in the conspiracy to assassinate the Sultan.[3] The fact is that Maulana Fakhr-u'd-din Razi had close contact with Shihab-u'd-din whom he deeply admired and the charge was mischievous. Minhaj informs us:

> "When they despatched the bier of Sultan Mu'izz-u'd-din from the halting place to Dam-Yak towards Ghaznin, the Turk Maliks and Amirs, who were the slaves of that Sultan-i-Ghazi, deprived the Amirs and Maliks of Ghur, by force, of the bier of the late Sultan, together with precious treasures, and took possession of them. When they reached Karman, the Wazir, Muayyid-ul-Mulk, Muhammad-i-Abd-ul-lah, the Sanjari, with several other persons distinguished among the Turk Amirs, were appointed to escort the late Sultan's bier to Ghaznin...."

It is clear from this statement that the bier of Sultan Mu'izz-u'd-din was taken to Ghaznin. Ferishta adds, without mentioning his authority, that the sultan was buried in the tomb he had built for his daughter.[4] However, the tomb is not to be identified anywhere in Ghaznin where, except the tomb of Sultan Mahmud, no monument of historical

significance has survived. Firuz Shah Tughluq makes the following statement in his *Futuhat*:

> "The mausoleum of Sultan Mu'izz-u'd-din Sam whose western wall and the panels of doors were old and decayed, was renovated; doors, windows and stars of sandal-wood were substituted for old wood work."[5]

This has given rise to a number of controversies:

1. Is this reference in Firuz Shah's *Futuhat* to Mu'izz-u'd-din Bahram's tomb which has been wrongly presented as that of Muhammad bin Sam? This is not possible because it occurs in sequence where Firuz refers to rulers and buildings in chronological order. Further, the tomb of Mu'izz-u'd-din Bahram has been mentioned by Firuz at its proper place separately.

2. Does it mean that the body of Mu'izz-u'd-din was later taken out from its burial place in Ghaznin and brought to Delhi and buried here? It was not unusual as Muhammad bin Tughluq's body was taken out from its grave at Sahwan and was brought and buried in Delhi. But there is no reference to Mu'izz-u'd-din's body being taken out and brought to Delhi after his burial at Ghaznin. This too is highly improbable that the grave of Mu'izz-u'd-din remained unnoticed in Delhi.

3. Some references are found in early literature to the construction of memorial monuments (or tombs) for distinguished saints, like Shaikh 'Ala-u'd-din of Ajodhan[6] and Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya of Delhi.[7] Maybe a memorial monument for Shihab-u'd-din was raised in Delhi. Firuz Shah's reference may be to such a memorial tomb.

4. The Marekala inscription was, in all probability, fixed at the place where Shihab-u'd-din was assassinated and his body was temporarily laid to rest. It was later removed to Ghaznin.

Nothing can, however, be definitely stated about the last resting place of Sultan Mu'izz-u'd-din.[8]

Qutb-u'd-din Aibek died in Lahore while playing *chaugan* (medieval polo) and was buried there (ob. 607/1210). Strangely enough, no grand structure was built over his grave which has remained neglected throughout the centuries in a lane of Anarkali Bazar in Lahore. According to *Da'irat al-Ma'arif al-Islamiya*, a project to construct a building over his grave is under consideration.[9]

Aibek's successor, Aram Shah, hardly ruled for a year. He was done to death but nothing is known about his grave.

Iltutmish breathed his last in Delhi on 20 Sha'ban, 633 H/29 April, 1236 and was buried in a tomb at the north-east corner of the Quwwat-

ul-Islam mosque, an area which had been the hub of his activities. According to Fergusson, it is "one of the richest examples of Hindu art applied to Muhammadan purposes that old Delhi affords and is extremely beautiful".[10] The tomb consists of a chamber 29'6" square, built of red sandstone elaborately carved. It has no dome now.[11] The interior surface is fretted with arabesque ornament. The upper portions of the walls have diapered design. Sir Syed's guess was that the tomb was built either during the reign of Rukn-u'd-din Firuz Shah or Sultan Raziya.[12] Its dilapidated conditions touched Sir Syed's heart.

Sultan Rukn-u'd-din Firuz who succeeded Iltutmish, ruled for about seven months. On 16 Rabi'-ul-Awwal 634/20 November 1236 he was put to death. His mausoleum stands in the village Malikpur. Firuz Shah repaired its enclosure and built a new dome over it.[13] It is a pavilion of eight pillars.[14]

Raziya breathed her last on 25 Rabi'-ul-Awwal 636/14 October 1240. Her grave is in a ruined condition within a dilapidated enclosure in the Mohalla Bulbuli Khana,[15] near the Turkaman gate.

It is difficult to identify the graves of Mu'izz-u'd-din Bahram who was killed on 13 Ziqa'da 639/15 May 1242, and 'Ala-u'd-din Mas'ud who was thrown into prison on 23 Muharram 644H/10 June 1245, and was subsequently done to death.

Sultan Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud died on February 18, 1266 under tragic circumstances.[16] According to 'Isami[17] and Ibn Battuta[18] he was poisoned by Balban; according to others he was starved to death. Shaikh Nur-ul-Haqq of Delhi says that Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud had willed that after his death his body be thrown in some cave.[19] The area now known as Sultan Garhi is really the place where the body of the Sultan was laid according to his will.[20]

When Balban breathed his last at the close of the year 1287, the *maliks*, says Barani, "tore their garments and threw dust on their heads as they followed, barefoot, the king's bier to the burial ground at *Dar-ul-Aman*".[21] But what surprises one is that despite this popularity his body was taken to the *Dar-ul-Aman* at the dead of night; may be that the *maliks* feared some reaction of people to what he had done to Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. But burying the sultans at night was perhaps due to political and emotional reasons. 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji was also buried at the dead of the night.[22] Shaikh Nur-ul-Haqq says that Firuz Shah Tughluq was so unhappy over Balban's treatment of Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud that he used to refer to him as *Ghulam-i-Khwaja Kush* (slave who was murderer of his master) and never visited his grave, though

before undertaking any campaign, it was customary with him to visit graves of all saints and rulers of Delhi.[23] This is perhaps true because there is no reference at all to Balban's grave in his *Futuhat*. Balban's tomb is situated some three hundred yards to the east of the mosque of Jamali, the old Qutb area. It is built of rubble. It has an arched opening in each of the four sides, but the dome has disappeared. Adjoining it on the east is a ruined compartment 24'6" by 19'8", where the Khan-i-Shahid, Balban's son, was buried.[24]

Mu'izz-u'd-din Kaiqubad's body was wrapped in a blanket, given a few kicks and drowned in the Jumna by a Malik whose father he had killed.[25] Nothing is known about his grave.

Jalal-u'd-din Khalji was killed on 17 Ramazan 695 H/20 July 1296 on the banks of the river Ganges by the hired assassins of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji. His body was perhaps brought to Delhi and buried here. Firuz Shah remarks in his *Futuhat*:

> "The mausoleum of Sultan Jalal-u'd-din Khalji was repaired and a new door was built in it."[26]

'Ala-u'd-din Khalji died on 7 Shawwal 715/6 January 1316.[27] He had suffered from dropsy and was perhaps poisoned by Malik Kafur.[28] His grave lies in a ruined structure beyond the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque. This tomb was built by Mubarak Shah and had a mosque and a *madrasah* attached to it. Firuz Shah says:

> "Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji's mausoleum was repaired and furnished with doors of sandal-wood. Walls of the water-reservoir and the western walls of the mosque, which is within the *madrasah*, and ground floor, *farah-i-pasheb* was repaired."[29]

Though people generally showed respect to the graves of the sultans, the way they venerated the grave of Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji was unique. They tied threads of prayer at his grave.[30]

Mubarak Khalji was assassinated by Khusrau Khan in Jamadi-us-Sani 720/July 1320, and his head was thrown down from the *Qasr-i-Hazar Sultan*. His grave and those of his brothers and sons are in Delhi. Firuz Shah says that he carried out some repairs there:

> "Fresh repairs were also carried out in the tombs of Sultan Qutb-u'd-din Khalji and (other) sons of Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din, namely Khizr Khan, Shadi Khan, Farid Khan, Sultan Shihab-u'd-din Sikandar Khan, Muhammad Khan, Usman Khan, and of ('Ala-u'd-din's) grandsons and great grandsons".[31]

Mubarak Khalji was held in high esteem by Muhammad bin Tughluq

who used to kiss his slippers when he went to his tomb. Ibn Battuta was for sometime in charge of distribution of food and supervision of the *khatmis* who recited the *Qur'an* at the tomb.[32]

The death of Sultan Ghiyas-u'd-din Tughluq was due to the fall of a wooden pavilion constructed in haste to welcome him back from a successful campaign. His tomb which stands near the Tughluqabad fort, was built by his son Muhammad. "Originally standing within an artificial lake", remarks Percy Brown, "a detached structure but connected with the citadel by an elevated causeway two hundred and fifty yards long, it takes the form of a self-contained fortress in miniature not unlike a barbican or outpost to the city at its rear; on the other hand it may also have been intended as a donjon or place of last resort."[33] The tomb building is of red sandstone with some portions, including the dome, of white marble. The outerwalls have a slope, suggesting the converging sides of a pyramid.

Muhammad bin Tughluq died in Muharram 752/March 1351, at the site of the modern Sonda village, some fourteen *karoh* from Tatta in Sind. Some scholars think that he was buried at Sahwan[34], but this is not borne out by historical evidence.[35] Maybe his body was temporarily laid to rest in Sahwan, but it was brought to Delhi and was buried in the tomb where the graves of other Tughluq rulers also exist. Statements of two early authors—Amir Khurd and Yahya Sirhindi—support the view that his body was brought to Delhi. Firuz Shah's statement is also clear on this point.[36]

Firuz Shah Tughluq had built a large square tomb for his own burial but when his son Fath Khan expired during his life-time, he buried him there.[37] Firuz Shah then built another tomb for his final rest in the Hauz Khas complex of buildings. The structure measures 46.5 feet square outside and 28 feet inside. The walls are of grey stone, plastered both inside and outside. There are two red stone lines of battlement. The lower line crowns the main walls and the upper line crowns the octagonal plinth from which springs the plain hemispherical dome. The sacrophagus of the Sultan is of white marble, standing on a pavement of white marble in small squares. The pendentive arches have a very slight horse-shoe shape. The entrance door has a talled pointed arch, filled with a thick trellis of red sandstone. Over the arch there is an inscription of two lines in stucco. According to John Marshall, "Its simple dignity and unpretentiousness must always have commanded admiration".[38] The tomb, it appears, was repaired by Sikandar Lodi in 913/1507.

The architecture of the Sayyid rulers has been designated *maqbara* (tomb) architecture. According to Percy Brown, they converted the country around the capital into a vast nectropolis.[39] More than fifty tombs belonged to nobles. "And at perhaps no other time", observes Percy Brown, "has the tomb been more manifest in the consciousness of the people than during the rule of the Sayyids and Lodis, and Delhi on account of its imperial associations, was considered the most appropriate site on which such buildings should be erected."[40]

Bahlul Lodi died on 13 Sha'ban, 894/July 12, 1489 near Jalali. He was buried in Delhi outside the west wall of the inner enclosure of the *dargah* of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh.[41]

Sikandar Lodi who died on 7 Ziqa'da 923/21 November 1517, was buried inside a garden he had himself laid out about a mile and quarter from the tomb of Safdar Jung.[42] It was built by his son Ibrahim in 923/11517 with stone and lime-mortar. The *chhatris* on the superstructure and the rotating veranda around the central hall have been artistically finished.

Ibrahim Lodi fell fighting the forces of Babur on 8 Rajab 932/20 April 1526. He was buried at the same place in Panipat where his body was found.

Commenting on the bomb architecture of the Sultanate period. Ernst Kühnel remarks: "The mausolea of the so-called Pathan period, are unmistakably derived from the Persian domed tombs; they are generally heavy in form, four-sided, tapering, and with four gates. Strongly battered enclosing walls with corner bastions gave them the character of fortified tomb-castles, and they retained this character until the end of the fourteenth century. The mausoleum raised by Muhammad bin Tughluq near Delhi in 1325 for his father has part of the enclosure wall designed inside as a pillared corridor with caves. The problem of the dome was not solved in the Persian fashion, but on the native principles which derived largely from wooden architecture, using *inter alia* wall brackets and groin vaulting."[43]

References

1. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, pp. 223-25.
2. Damyak still exists a few miles away from the Lahore-Rawalpindi Road, near another small village Kot, close to Jhelum. See Khwaja 'Abd-ur-Rashid's article on *Maqtal-i-Ghuri* in *Burhan*, Delhi, January, 1956, pp. 17-29.
3. *Ibn Asir*, vol. XII, p. 83.
4. *Tarikh-i-Ferishta*, I, p. 60.

5. *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, Eng. tr., p. 116.
6. *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, p. 193.
7. Ibid., p. 154.
8. For some interesting articles on the theme, *Ma'arif*, Sept, 1943; *Burhan*, Jan. 1956, Nov-Dec. 1969.
9. Vol. III, p. 618.
10. Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, p. 509.
11. *The Monuments of Delhi*, vol. III, pp. 20-21.
12. *Asar-us-Sanadid*, p. 81.
13. *Futuhat*, Eng. tr., p. 117.
14. R. Nath, *The Monuments of Delhi*, pp. 29-30.
15. *Asar-us-Sanadid*, p. 172.
16. See Nizami, *Studies in Medieval Indian History and Culture*, chapter on "Balban, the Regicide", pp. 41-5.
17. *Futuh-us-Salatin*, p. 163.
18. *Rehla*, tr., text, II, p. 22.
19. *Zubdat-ut-Tawarikh*, p. 15b.
20. Ibid., MS, 15b.
    Sir Syed does not say who lies buried there. Bashir-u'd-din (*Waqi'at-i Dar-ul-Hakumat*, III, pp. 345-53) thought it was the grave of Iltutmish's eldest son. Carr Stephen also holds the same view (*Archaeology and Monumental Remains of Delhi*, pp. 70-73). See also Zafar Hasan, "Desecration of Sultan Ghori's tomb at Delhi," *Arch. Sur. of India Report*, 1925-26, pp. 171-72.
21. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 122.
22. Ibid., p. 369.
23. *Zubdat-ut-Tawarikh*, 15bf.
24. *The Monuments of Delhi*, III, p. 94.
25. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 183.
26. *Futuhat*, Eng. tr., p. 117.
27. *Duwal Rani Khazir Khan*, p. 259.
28. Barani, p. 369.
29. *Futuhat*, tr., p. 118.
30. *Khair-ul-Majalis*, pp. 241-42.
31. *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 118.
32. *'Aja'ib-ul-Asfar*, pp. 225-26.
33. *Indian Architecture*, p. 20.
34. Prof. M. Shafi' in *Oriental College Magazine*, February 1935, p. 150; Dr. Daudpota, *Tarikh Ma'sumi*, pp. 281-82.
35. Baloch, Nabi Bakhsh in *Islamic Culture*, January 1948, pp. 71-74.
36. *Futuhat*, pp. 119-20.
37. Zafar Hasan, *List of Muhammadan and Hindu Monuments*, vol. II, pp. 241-43.
38. *Cambridge History of India*, vol. III, p. 591.
39. *Indian Architecture*, p. 26.
40. Ibid.
41. *Asar-us-Sanadid*, pp. 21-22; Zafar Hasan, *List of Muhammadan and Hindu Monuments in Delhi*, vol. II, no. 238.
42. Stephen Carr, *Arch. Monuments of Delhi*.
43. *Islamic Art and Architecture*, London, 1966, p. 96.

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